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THE TIMES

50P

No. 65,862

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

TODAY

BRIAN GLANVILLE MEETS GIANFRANCO ZOLA
MAGAZINE

A MODEL FRIEND
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Tories free to attack single currency

Cabinet lets Euro-sceptics off the leash

BY ANDREW PIERCE POLLY NEWTON AND PHILIP WEBSTER

TORY candidates wishing to defy the Government line on the single currency were given Cabinet blessing yesterday as it emerged that parliamentary aides to the Foreign Secretary and party chairman had joined the list of those saying Britain must keep the pound.

Only hours after John Major reiterated that ministers who breached the "wait and see" policy would be dismissed, William Hague, the Welsh Secretary and leading Euro-sceptic, said candidates were free to say what they liked about the euro.

His remarks were supported by Conservative Central Office which said that candidates, provided they were not ministers, had long known that they could express their personal preferences in their election addresses.

Labour and Liberal Democrats exploited the apparent contradiction, claiming that Mr Major's attempt to control the rebellion had fallen apart.

Mr Hague spoke as part of a concerted effort to downplay statements in an election newsletter by Angela Browning, the Agriculture Minister, who severely strained the Government's carefully crafted policy on the single currency. "Conservative candidates do not all have to write exactly the same election addresses," he said on Radio 4's *The World at One*, though he failed to stipulate that candidates who were ministers were exceptions to the rule. "Candidates are free to set out their views," he added.

The Prime Minister claimed Mrs Browning's concern had focused principally on tax and spend policy. "She makes it clear that she would not agree to transfer of nation sovereignty over tax and spend policy. Well, let me make it absolutely clear neither would I, neither would the Government. So the position there is quite clear."

Some 150 candidates have already received financial assistance from Paul Sykes, the millioniare businessman, in return for opposing a single currency in their election manifestos.

There was speculation that another minister might joint the revolt.

David MacLean, the Euro-sceptic Minister of State at the Home Office, declined to answer calls on the subject yesterday. A spokeswoman in his constituency office in Penrith and the Borders said: "The election address will be printed next week."

Alan Duncan, parliamentary private secretary to Brian Mawhinney, the Tory Chairman, is another high profile rebel. He wrote: "Britain must retain the right to make its own law. The EU should be a free trade area of sovereign nation states choosing to co-operate in some areas. We must keep our veto at all costs. I am opposed to a single European currency."

Henry Bellingham, the parliamentary aide to Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, has supported the wait and see policy but made clear he would vote against a single currency in the next Parliament.

Charles Hendry, a vice-chairman of the Tory Party who is fighting the marginal seat of High Peaks, wrote: "Nothing so far has persuaded me that it would be in our interests to join [the single currency]."

Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, has left voters in Harrogate in little doubt. He has published posters which state: "No Surrender. Keep the pound. No to the euro."

David Heathcoat-Amory, who resigned as Paymaster General to oppose a single currency, has posted his opposition to the euro on the Internet.

Nigel Evans, who is parliamentary private secretary to Mr Hague, has also signalled opposition to the single currency in his election address in Ribble Valley.

John Prescott, the Deputy Labour leader, said: "John Major ... is being defied by up to 200 Tory candidates. The British Tory Party makes the Borgias look like a happy family."

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Both sides keep hope of TV debate alive

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

HOPES of a television debate between John Major and Tony Blair remained alive last night after talks between *The Times*, the broadcasters and representatives of the two main parties.

Peter Stothard, Editor of *The Times*, has challenged both leaders to take part in a debate organised by the newspaper and covered by the television companies tomorrow week in central London.

Michael Dobbs, the Conservative negotiator, said after speaking to Mr Stothard and the broadcasters: "They are as keen as we are to hold this historic debate." It would be difficult in the short time left to agree details but "I am sure that with goodwill it can be done."

ITV and the BBC have indicated their willingness to film the debate. Under proposals put forward by *The Times* it would be between Mr Major and Mr Blair, but arrangements would be made for Paddy Ashdown to be given a fair hearing.

Mr Blair's office indicated last night that it was ready for talks.

RUSSELL BOYCE / REUTER

John Major yesterday: his smile's broadened after Thursday's *Times* MORI poll

How Major got his smile back

Matthew Parris watches a man who has moved from exhaustion at the start of the week to hope at its finish

HIT the "mute" button on your video recorder. Watch John Major's press conference on Tuesday. Then, still without sound, watch Thursday's conference. The change in the body language is unmistakable.

Something in the eyes, the mouth, the facial muscles and movements of the head tells you wordlessly that this is a man who has moved from exhaustion and despair at the start of the week, to hope at its finish. Even his jokes are starting to work.

Like any complicated individual, John Major has become the subject of myth. Principal among the myths is the "If ..." myth — "If you can keep your head when all about you/Are losing theirs ..." etc. Major the stoic: the notion that this archetypal Englishman is unflappable and phlegmatic in all circumstances.

The image is reinforced by another: the "even keel" myth. The Prime Minister, it is said, is an unemotional man: cool, detached, slow to chide and swift to bless.

Finally, and linked to these, is the "nice bloke" myth: the idea that Mr Major is relaxed and amiable, ready, even in the crack of doom, for a pint and a chat about cricket with anyone he meets.

Those who work with him will tell you a different story. Fiercely loyal to him, every one of them — nobody who knows him has any doubt of his fundamental decency and kindness — they nevertheless speak of the Prime Minister with a terrible temper, subject to black moods of great intensity, who suffers days at a stretch gripped with something not far from a conviction that the whole world is out to get him.

"Imagine," he once said to a friend who suggested that being Prime Minister must be a terrific buzz, "that you were an actor who, after a first

Continued on page 2, col 3

Police praise courage in court of gang rape victim

BY LIN JENKINS AND RICHARD FORD

AN AUSTRIAN gang rape victim flew home to Vienna last night after British police and lawyers praised her remarkable composure while giving evidence of the attack in which she was also subjected to other sexual acts and racially abused.

But the woman, who heard a jury convict the eighth member of a group of teenagers of the violent sexual assault, broke down in tears at the completion of her evidence.

The woman, aged 32, a mother of a son aged five and daughter of three, had returned to London seven months after a weekend shopping trip ended with the attack by the eight boys near her hotel in King's Cross.

She came back to give evidence at the Old Bailey trial of the 15-year-old youth who denied rape, indecent assault and robbing the woman. The seven other youths, part of a gang left to run wild on the capital's streets, had admitted the rape.

Last night after the youth had been found guilty, Detective Sergeant Keith Manktelow, the officer in charge of the case, said: "I would commend the victim for her bravery in going through all this." The woman won praise for the manner in which she re-lived the horrific gang rape on the towpath of Regents Canal.

The woman had remained calm as she recalled the 45-minute ordeal. She had shown similar coolness during the attack. "During these rapes the reason that she survived as she did seems to be that she, in her own words, separated her mind from her body as much as she could, a remarkable achievement in the circumstances," John Bevan, QC, said at the Old Bailey. Her calm and quiet dignity in the witness box masked months of emotional turmoil.

Her marriage broke up and she moved with her two children to live with her mother. One week after her return from London, she suddenly left her job in a travel agency where friends had been anxious to offer her support. She now works at the city's airport in a solitary job. Although she has left her husband, the couple remain in close contact.

Her strong willpower was revealed both during the attack and in the witness box. She shed no tears as she gave her evidence and the only moment her composure looked like slipping was when she was asked to study photographs of her teenage attackers.

Even after she was informed that she did not have to look at the pictures if it would upset her, the woman said she would do so if it helped the court.

One source close to the case believes that those tears at the end of the case could signal the start of the healing process. She had bottled up her emotions since the attack, refusing the now fashionable counselling to help her overcome the attack.

Two brothers, one the youth convicted yesterday, were Filipino, four of the gang Afro-Caribbean, one Colombian and one white with a Greek-Cypriot father. Seven will be sentenced next Friday and the ringleader, a 6'2" tall 14-year-old, next month.

London blackout plot alleged

Large parts of London and the South East would have been blacked out for months if an IRA gang had destroyed key power installations, an Old Bailey jury was told ... Page 3

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Scientist goes to law over pattern on the humble roll

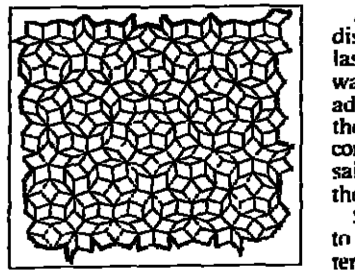
BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

ONE of Britain's foremost scientists is suing the makers of a leading brand of lavatory paper.

Sir Roger Penrose, Rouse Ball Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, says that although Kleenex Quilted may be super-absorbent and gentle on the skin, it has no right to achieve this by using the mathematical pattern he designed 20 years ago. In his legal action he seeks destruction of all stocks of the paper bearing the pattern.

With Pentaplex Ltd, a company that markets puzzles and other material based on his design, Sir Roger has issued a High Court writ against Kimberly-Clark, manufacturers of Kleenex, claiming infringement of copyright.

Yesterday David Bradley of Pentaplex said: "So often we read of very large companies riding roughshod over small businesses or individuals, but when it comes to the population of Great Britain being invited by a multinational [company] to wipe their bottoms on what appears to be the work of a knight of the realm without his permission, then a last stand must be made."



The Penrose Pattern

Sir Roger, 65, is one of Britain's most distinguished mathematical physicists, an expert on black holes and consciousness. His "Penrose Pattern" consists of diamond shapes, one narrow, one broader, that fit together to fill a two-dimensional plane with no gaps.

Kimberly-Clark said it had discussions with Pentaplex last year, after the complaint was made. "We were trying to address the question, but those discussions were never concluded," a spokesman said. "At the end of last week, the writ was issued."

Sir Roger's wife was the first to notice the embossed pattern, which appears on the

Continued on page 2, col 5

Secret runners join marathon treadmill

BY DAVID POWELL AND JOHN GOODBODY

AS THE 40,000 or so runners in this year's Flora London Marathon set off from Blackheath tomorrow they will have hidden company. In more than 60 gymnasiums and health clubs up and down Britain, another 1,500 would-be competitors, unable to gain a place in the real race, will take part too — on treadmills. To spur them on, they will be able to watch the official runners on television screens.

The project, devised by the Cancer Research Campaign and dubbed Marathon Mania, is expected to raise £20,000 for the charity.

Tracy Cooper, of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "We get so many calls from people who do not get places, this way everybody can take part." Just as each participant who completes the 26 miles 385 yards from Blackheath to The Mall will get a finisher's Flora foil blanket, so will the unseen marathoners.

However, some of tomorrow's treadmill runners will have a head start. Those who did not fancy the distance in one press of a button have been allowed to cover it in stages. They have made their way, slowly but surely, for the past two weeks, charting progress on a course map.

The whole idea stemmed from the disappointment of Annette Owen, who trained in a gym to help her recovery from ovarian cancer. She applied to enter the 1995 London Marathon but was rejected, so decided that, having trained on a treadmill, she would run the marathon on one.

Marathon preview, page 47

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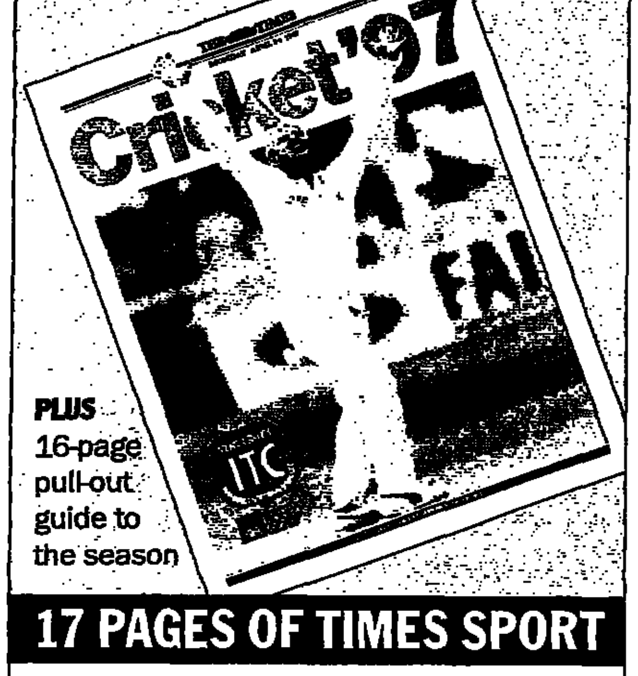

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FA Cup semi-final reports
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AND THE WINNERS ARE...
Starting on Monday, the complete Flora London Marathon results

MASTERS STROKE
Nick Faldo's hopes for US glory. Report from Augusta

PLUS: ARGENTINIAN GRAND PRIX

Firefighters' strike vote may spread nationwide

By Michael Horsnell

FIREFIGHTERS voted yesterday to stage a series of one-day strikes in Essex over a proposed £1.5 million budget cut in the service by the county council. Their industrial action could spread nationwide.

Council chiefs immediately warned the Fire Brigades Union that strikers could face suspension or dismissal if they go ahead with their action, starting with a 24-hour walkout a week today followed by a four-hour walkout on Monday, April 21.

As 300 troops stood by to man a fleet of elderly Green Goddess appliances, the union responded with a threat that if any firefighters were sacked, a ballot would be called of its 50,000 members for a national strike.

Some 58.2 per cent of Essex's 900-plus firefighters voted for strikes, despite a guarantee by Chris Pearson, the Labour leader of the council in which there is a shared administration with the Liberal Democrats, that there would be no redundancies or fire station closures and that all pay awards will be honoured.

The union replied that public safety was at risk because the Essex Brigade was already 16 short of its Home Office-approved strength of 928, a discrepancy that would increase to 50 by the end of the year because of a council freeze on recruitment.

John Sherrington, the county's chief fire officer said: "This dispute will have to be settled around the table and not on a picket line."

The Green Goddesses will be manned by troops from 24 Airmobile Brigade, who are based at the army garrison in Colchester. They will be deployed at 14 towns throughout the county.

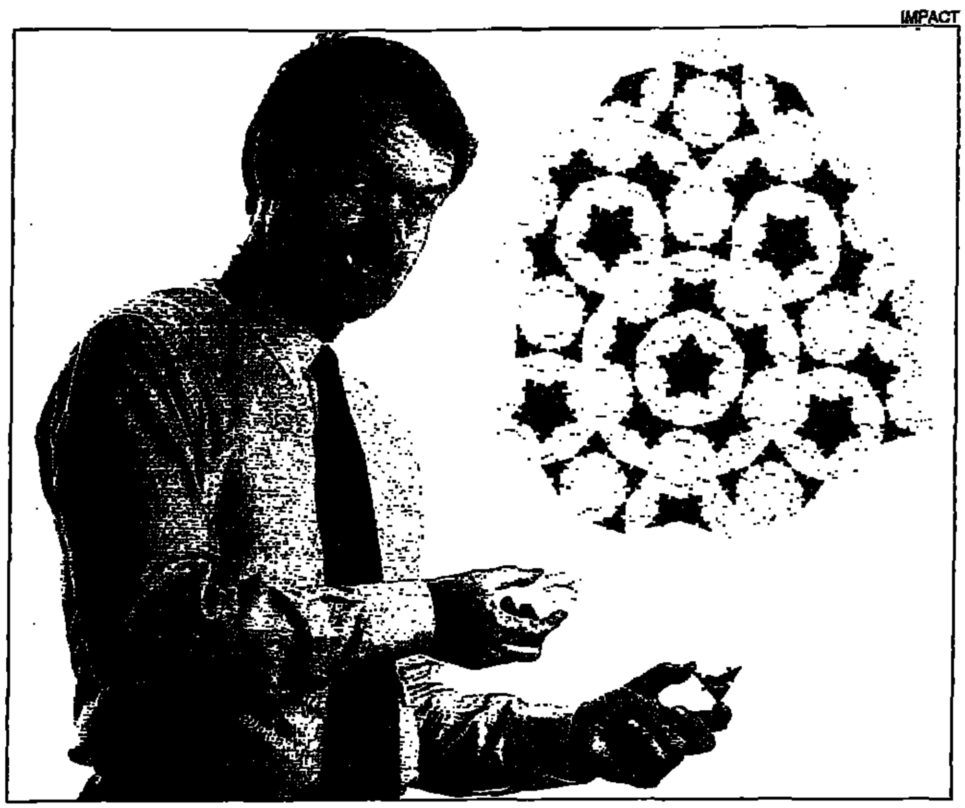
Mr Pearson blamed government-enforced cuts of £51 million in the council budget which he said had been reduced to £22 million through the use of council reserve funds. He condemned the "spurious" claims of the firefighters whose action placed lives at risk. He said: "This is a very disappointing and selfish decision. We have been explaining to the Fire Brigades Union for several months the dire financial position Essex has been placed in by central government. Yet the firefighters appear blind to logic and reason."

The bill for alternative fire cover could cost the authority £1 million a month, he said, and was already costing £50,000 per week to keep the Green Goddesses on standby.

As the brigade announced its strike, members of the Fire Brigades Union in London and counties surrounding Essex were being balloted on a policy of non-cooperation with army firefighters on strike days.

Tory attack, page 10

IMPACT



Sir Roger Penrose, who says his copyright has been infringed by Kimberly-Clark

Scientist sues over humble roll

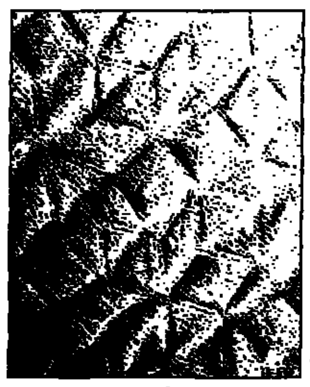
Continued from page 1

tissues and until recently also featured on product packaging. Richard Kempner, of Addleshaw Booth, the lawyer handling the suit, said that, as Sir Roger's "original artistic work", the pattern was automatically protected under copyright law. "We think we have a very strong case," he added.

"Kimberly-Clark's only defence would be that they had created the pattern independently, and we think they will find that very hard to prove. In one of their US patent applications for embossed tissue, they actually say that the pattern closely approximates that known as the Penrose Pattern."

Mr Kempner says that Sir Roger is entitled to all the additional profits that the company has earned as a result of using his pattern, adding: "That could be a large amount."

Quilted tissue has the advantage of achieving softness and absorbency while using less paper. In addition, a pattern that does not repeat itself regularly has the advantage that successive layers on the rolls are less likely to stick together.



A close-up of a sheet of Kleenex lavatory paper

Sir Roger's action is a far cry from his usual scientific and mathematical work. He collaborated with Professor Stephen Hawking of Cambridge in studies of black holes in space. Their theorems in 1964 laid the basis for much subsequent work in cosmology. He has been interested in geometrical figures for many years, first working on them with his father, the geneticist Lionel Penrose.

☐ Lavatory paper was first sold in New York in 1857 by Joseph C. Gayetty. It cost 50 cents for 500 loose sheets and was known as "Gayetty's Medicated Paper — a perfectly pure article for the toilet and the prevention of piles." The first toilet rolls were sold by Seth Wheeler in New York in 1871, and by Walter Alcock in Britain in 1879.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Court win for abused nanny

A nanny who was whipped and beaten and treated like a slave by her Nigerian employers was awarded £100,000 damages at the High Court yesterday. However, Helen Samuels, 30, is unlikely to receive more than about £12,500 from Dr Truman Abassah and his wife, Philomena, who have been deported to Nigeria. The sum represents their frozen assets in Britain.

Fewer pass L-test

Fewer learner drivers are passing their tests since the written examination was made more difficult last year. When the the test was first brought in last July, the pass rate was 87 per cent, but since a higher pass mark on the theory examination was introduced, that has decreased to less than 65 per cent.

E. coli victim

An elderly woman who was poisoned in the *E. coli 0157* outbreak in central Scotland last year died yesterday, bringing to 19 the number of people who died as a result of the incident. The woman, who has not been named, was a resident of Bankview nursing home, at Banknock, near Falkirk.

Collector scores

A collection of 14,000 football programmes spanning more than a century has been sold for £77,973. The sheet for England's 8-1 win over Ireland in 1884 sold for £4,400, the top price of the 572 lots auctioned by Bonhams. A programme for the 1926 England v Scotland international at Old Trafford fetched £860.

How Major got his smile back on a bruising roller-coaster ride

Continued from page 1

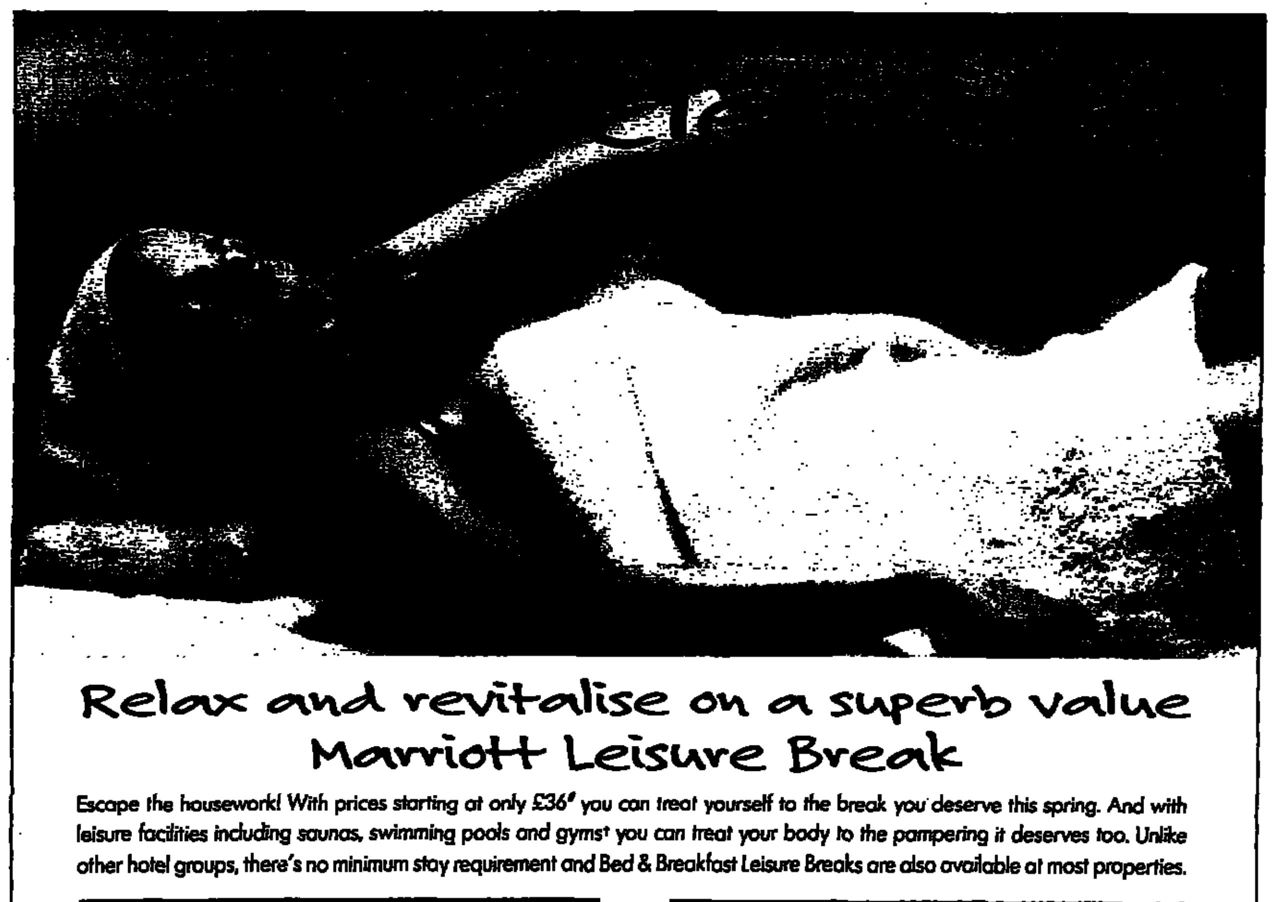
night in which you played the lead role, woke up next morning to sneering and scathing reviews in every paper. Now, imagine you had to go on waking to those reviews, dawn after dawn, year after year." That was not his idea of a buzz.

Major, so far from being an unusually phlegmatic man, is unusually easily bruised. But he is not a quitter. He keeps fighting and it keeps hurting. The result is that he gets very bruised indeed, and for long periods. His mood swings suddenly.

On Tuesday in Birmingham, after another weekend's bad press and the opinion polls apparently stuck, his top lip looked like cardboard. At that morning's press conference he kept his head immobile and facial muscles tight, smiling once in half an hour. His eyes were narrow. He blinked often but slowly. The expression was dull and heavy, like Garfield the Cat. His voice lost all light and shade. The overall impression was of huge but frozen anger, depression and fatigue.

On Thursday morning *The Times* printed a MORI poll suggesting a swing from Labour to the Conservatives. But that was not all: there had been a change in the wind. Tony Blair had looked rattled and new doubts about new Labour and its leader hung in the air. You might think an old pro like John Major would have been ready to disregard this possible blip. But his demeanour at that morning's press conference said otherwise. I challenge experts in physiognomy to freeze-frame the video and take a ruler to Mr Major's eyes. They were wider. His mouth moved. His lip flexed. His eyebrows rose. He smiled. He blinked less and at normal speed. His voice regained its elasticity.

By yesterday he was able to take, quite cheerfully, serious heckling in Norwich. By tomorrow it may all change. By Monday it may all change back. What never changes is the capacity of men who have seen it all before, who have taken every imaginable knock, who have been flattered and insulted to the last degree, and who would — we might imagine — after 30 years on this roller-coaster — have been reduced to a heap of scar tissue encased in a human husk, to experience, as though still in the first years of their adolescence, huge despair — and sudden hope.



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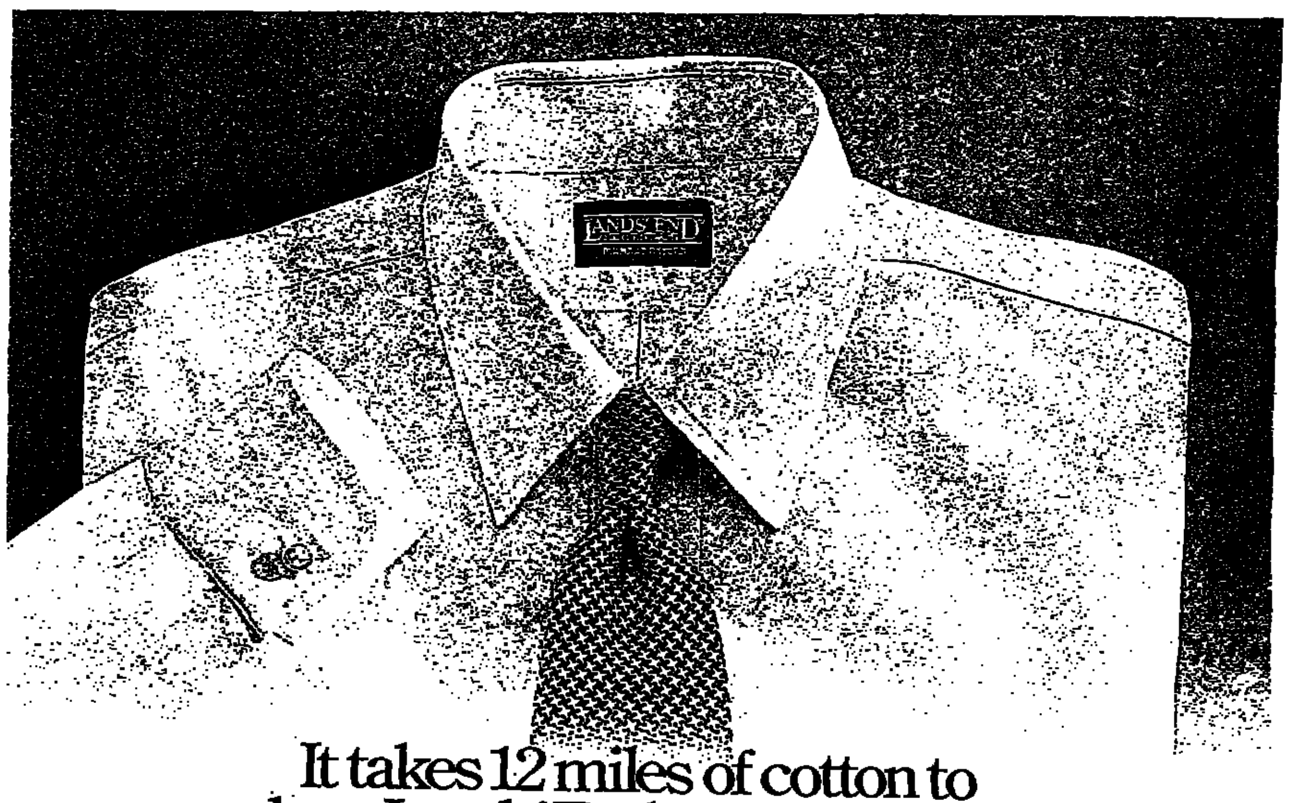

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And actually, it takes *more* than 12 miles of it to make one of our Pinpoints – 12 miles, 946 feet, to be exact.

Some off-the-cuff remarks

These beauties are made with the kind of "Old World" tailoring you don't find much anymore, even in the Old World.

Each one takes 69 different sewing steps, for example.

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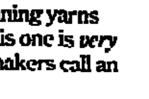
You can also pat us on the back for the full box pleat on the back. This pleat opens up when you reach across a table. So the shirt feels roomier.



The yoke is split – moves when you do

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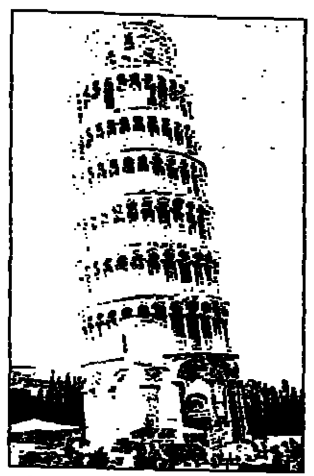


Tons of lead has halted the Pisa tower toppling

Briton helps stop Pisa tower toppling

By A Staff Reporter

The Leaning Tower of Pisa has been saved from toppling over by a British soil expert, who advised placing large amounts of lead on one side of its base.

"We are euphoric," John Burland, Professor of Soil Mechanics at Imperial College, London, said. "The tower has stopped its tilt. This is the greatest success in seven centuries. We did not aim to straighten the tower but halt its inclination — otherwise there would be no Leaning Tower."

Work started on the 179ft white marble tower in northern Italy in 1173 and took 186 years to complete. The professor was called in four years ago after it was calculated that the landmark, by then around 17ft off perpendicular, might topple by 2050.

Earlier attempts to halt the tilt, caused by layers of clay, mud and soil beneath it sinking unevenly, all failed. A decision in 1823 to excavate the walkway around the foundations caused the tower to lean by an extra 1ft 6in.

On the professor's advice, 900 tons of lead was laid on the ground around its high side. The Italian Government invested £50 million in securing the 15,000-ton tourist attraction, closed seven years ago for safety.

Professor Burland said that his "quite phenomenally successful" idea had been based on a simple engineering calculation.

Police foiled active service unit's blitz on electricity substations, court told

IRA gang 'planned to black out London and South East for months'

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

LARGE parts of London and the South East would have had no electricity for months if an IRA gang had succeeded last summer in destroying key power installations, the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

But the alleged plot to plunge consumers into darkness was foiled by a joint operation by police and the security services.

Nigel Sweeney, for the prosecution, said that seven members of an IRA active service unit were in London within months of the ceasefire ending. One of the gang came from an Irish-American background and had served in the US Marines where he specialised in demolition and explosives. Using detailed maps of the National Grid they were said to be preparing for a blitz on six sub-stations. An eighth man was to provide the group with support and find premises in the Birmingham area, where a lorry could be secretly unloaded, Mr Sweeney added.

But the gang was under surveillance by police and the Security Service as they reconnoitred their targets last summer. When police raided addresses in London and Birmingham they found National Grid maps indicating the targets and 37 units for powering and timing bombs set out in the basement of a rented home in Peckham, south London.

Yesterday amid tight security the eight all denied conspiracy to cause explosions between January and July last year. They are Gerard Hanratty, 38, Martin Murphy, 38, Donald Gannon, 34; Patrick Martin, 35, Robert Morrow, 37, Francis Rafferty, 45, John Crawley, 39, and Clive Brampton, 36.

Opening the prosecution case, Mr Sweeney said that seven of the men were members of an active service unit which had came over from Ireland to carry out the attacks. Mr Brampton was not part of the unit but provided support such as false identities. Mr Sweeney said that Mr Crawley served in the United States Marines between 1975 and 1979. He had been part of a reconnaisance unit in Japan and specialised in map-reading as well as basic demolition, including how to handle explosives to maximum effect. In 1979 he was said to have been an instructor in amphibious reconnaissance in Virginia.

The jury was told that the "initial targets" of the gang were six electricity substations which together supplied the main external electrical feed to London from the National Grid. If the bombs had gone off they would have caused "serious and widespread loss of electricity to London and the South-East. Consumers would have been affected over a considerable period of time with little liklihood of supplies back to normal for months."

The substations surround London and are called Amersham Main, Elstree, Waltham Cross, Rayleigh Main, West Weybridge and Canterbury North. Five of the six stations had been reconnoitred by members of the gang before they were arrested. Mr Sweeney said that each of the timing and power units found by police at a rented house in Peckham would have been used with 2.5kg of high-performance Semtex explosive and would have been capable of causing a powerful explosion.

Mr Sweeney said that the IRA ceasefire had been over by some months by the time of the plan, but it must have taken some time to prepare. For that reason, he told the jury, the plot was alleged to have started at the beginning of 1996.

The gang spent £10,000 in buying equipment for the attacks. They rented a garage, two flats and the house as well as buying three cars. When the alleged members of the active service unit were arrested they had another £14,700 in cash.

Mr Sweeney said that Mr Crawley adopted an American accent as part of his disguise when the gang were making arrangements. Mr Morrow used French papers, adopted a French accent and called himself Jean-Louis Benzaquen.

The gang bought bolt cutters and six extending ladders, which were cut up and adapted to fit into the boots of cars. The ladders could be put together again. While the gang were under surveillance Mr Gannon was watched at Battersea public library as he researched the electrical supply industry and made notes from a book called the *Electricity Supply Handbook*.

A map of the National Grid was found to be missing from the book and one was later found in a flat used by the gang. Police were also watching when Mr Gannon and Mr Murphy met at a station at Wimbledon Park in south London. They saw Mr Rafferty looking at people's ears to make sure they were not wearing radio earpieces.

Mr Sweeney told the jury that by July 14 last year preparations were reaching an advanced stage. Final planning and the delivery of Semtex and detonators had yet to be made. When the police struck the next day they found a map of the National Grid at a rented flat in Tooting, south London, as well as false identifications and notes of timing units.

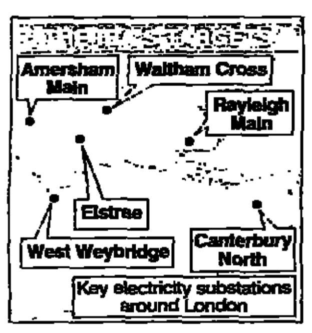
At the house in Peckham the batteries for the timing units were on charge. There were maps for two of the substations and how to get to each of them. The seven alleged members of the unit refused to say anything when they were interviewed, Mr Sweeney said.

Mr Rafferty went on hunger strike. Mr Crawley admitted renting the garage and the Tooting flat under a false name and said he thought he was taking part in a social security fraud and that he and the others were going on an innocent camping trip.

Mr Brampton told police he had made contact with a man he knew was linked to the IRA because he wanted help with a bad debt in Ireland. He had been asked to find premises in Birmingham where a lorry could be unloaded. The case continues

SIÂN FRANCIS

An artist's drawing of the accused, from left: Morrow, Crawley, Gannon, Rafferty, Brampton, Hanratty, Martin, and Martin Murphy



Key electricity substations around London

Principal criticised over £8m college deficit

By David Charter
Education Correspondent

THE sacked principal of a college with an £8 million budget shortfall bullied staff and was guilty of "wilful neglect", an auditors' report said yesterday.

An inquiry by Coopers & Lybrand found the relationship between Neil Preston, principal of Stoke-on-Trent College, and a senior female colleague, was one factor which put public funds at the college at risk.

Mr Preston and Helen Chandler, his marketing manager, were dismissed on Christmas Eve after the college investigated a series of complaints by staff about their behaviour.

The pair had been absent on paid sick leave since September and were found by *The Times* in November running a pub in North Wales. After their departure from the 21,000-student college, the funding shortfall was discovered which led the new management to plan 200 redundancies.

Coopers & Lybrand was asked to investigate the way financial and management controls had broken down. In its report yesterday, it said the controls were damaged by Mr Preston's style, his close working relationship with George Mardle, the former chairman of governors, and "the effect of the personal relationship" between him and Mrs Chandler.

The report found the two managers stifled any dissent to their decisions by treating others with "open hostility or ridicule" in front of the rest of the senior management team.

When the college decided to change its system for collecting student data, Mr Preston and Mrs Chandler took control from the finance director. In 1995-96 they missed every deadline for sending information to the Further Education Funding Council and ended up vastly overestimating the money they were due.

Mr Preston and Mrs Chandler were unavailable for comment yesterday. They have both lodged claims for unfair dismissal with an industrial tribunal.

Ulster PC fights for life after sniper shooting

By Nicholas Watt
Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE family of Alice Collins, the police constable who was shot by an IRA sniper in Londonderry, gathered at her bedside in an intensive care unit yesterday.

Mrs Collins, 46, who has three children, was in a serious condition after undergoing six hours of emergency surgery during the night at Altnagelvin Hospital.

Mrs Collins's eldest daughter, who is pregnant, and her son flew home from England to join their father and younger sister at the hospital. Other relatives gathered at the home of Mrs Collins's father in the Protestant Waterside area of Londonderry.

She was shot in the back while on duty outside the city's courthouse on Thursday afternoon. The bullet struck her at the top of the back and passed through her upper body and flak-jacket.

A family friend said: "Alice is a fighter. Everybody who knows her is hoping that her fighting spirit will see her through this difficult time."

James Mehaffey, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, spoke yesterday to the family of Mrs Collins, who is well known in Londonderry. Dr Mehaffey said: "It is quite devastating that a mother of three, a working mother, should be gunned down in the middle of our city. I think the community in Derry is not prepared to lie down under this."

Miriam Collins, whose office overlooks the courthouse, told yesterday of efforts to help Mrs Collins after the shooting: "I heard a bang and ran downstairs into the street where I saw Alice lying on the ground with her colleagues trying to assist her. We put her into the recovery position. Two off-duty nurses tried to stem the bleeding from her wounds."

Ms Collins, 40, originally from the Irish Republic and not related to the constable, said: "I am appalled that I have come face to face with evil."

The shooting prompted loyalist leaders to warn yesterday of a possible "revenge attack" by Protestant terrorists. David Ervine, of the Progressive Unionist Party, the political wing of the Ulster Volunteer Force, urged loyalists not to follow the "IRA's agenda". But he added: "The situation is very bad within the loyalist community."

Alice Collins, a well-known RUC officer in Londonderry, had six hours of emergency surgery after the shooting

Child sees mother die in garden accident

By Paul Wilkinson

A MOTHER died yesterday after a tree branch fell on her head as she was mowing the lawn. Her four-year-old daughter witnessed the accident and ran into the street shouting "Mummy's poorly".

Neighbours called an ambulance but Sharon Beale, aged in her early 30s, was already dead. Her husband Andrew was working in Italy. He was preparing to fly home to Wistow, North Yorkshire, last night to comfort their children, Harriet, 4, and Nicholas, 5.

Phil Wade, assistant divisional officer of Selby fire station, said the branch of the 90-year-old ash tree, which was about 18ins in diameter, fell because it was rotten. "The tree was outside the garden wall but the branch must have been overhanging the garden.

"She had a young daughter playing in the area, and apparently she ran up and down the road saying 'My mummy's poorly' and somebody rang 999." Mr Wade said that by the time officers got to the scene there was nothing that could be done. "It looks like she was killed instantly."

George Hill who runs a garage business across the village said: "There was gust of wind, just like a whirlwind or a tornado, seconds before I heard a loud crash. Then I saw the branch of the ash tree fall into the garden."

The children were being cared for by relatives last night.

Is there a tax adviser in the house?

By Stephen Farrell

A TAX consultant trying to sell advice to a hospital anaesthetist paged him on his emergency bleeper in mid-operation. Security staff who traced the call found Peter Gooch dialling from a telephone in the hospital dining room with a list of doctors' work and pager numbers.

The John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford is now demanding an explanation from the Manchester tax consultancy Chancellors Group. Chancellors says that the anaesthetist, Dr Hugh Howells, gave the consultant his pager number after agreeing to an appointment.

It said lists of doctors' names were sold by many organisations, including the British Medical Association, adding that a doctor who had made an appointment with a tax consultant unfamiliar with the layout of the hospital might give him his pager number in case of a problem.

The British Medical Association confirmed that it did sell lists of doctors, but said that they contained only home addresses for mailing purposes, not work telephone or pager numbers.

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Teenager dies on school skiing trip

By Adam Fresco

A SIXTH former died on a school skiing trip hours after winning the prize as the best skier when he fell 60ft from a hotel balcony.

Martin Mahoney, 17, was on a week-long break at Badgastein in Austria when the incident happened on Thursday evening, the last day of the trip. He was found by one of his friends, who tried to revive him. Austrian police were yesterday trying to discover how he managed to fall from the balcony at the Hotel Bristol.

His father, also called Martin, a probation officer, said yesterday: "It still hasn't sunk in yet that Martin won't be coming home. The bottom has fallen out of our world."

The dead boy, from Cardiff, was studying A levels in geography, computing and geology at St David's College in the city. His mother, Pat, a college lecturer, said: "He wanted to go to university in Bath but he hadn't decided on a career yet. All he knew was that he wanted to work outdoors."

Derek Bodey, the college principal, said: "Martin was a very popular student. He was an asset to our community and his loss will be felt deeply by us all."

The Foreign Office said that a full investigation would be carried out.

Oxford student who feared exams is found hanged

By Emma Wilkins

AN OUTSTANDING Oxford University history student was found hanged in her room after seeking counselling for depression over her final examinations.

Sarah Napuk, 22, an undergraduate at Lady Margaret Hall, had already won a postgraduate scholarship to Harvard to continue her studies. She was expected to achieve first-class honours in her finals in June.

Miss Napuk's body was found hanging in her bedroom in Oxford on Thursday lunchtime, Thames Valley police said.

Sir Brian Fall, the principal of Lady Margaret Hall, said: "She was extraordinarily gifted academically and an outstanding student of this university. The quality of her work has been at the level to produce a first throughout her time here.

"Sarah played an enormously supportive role in welfare issues throughout the college. She went out of her way to advise and help people she found in trouble," he said.

Sir Brian said Miss Napuk had sought advice from the college's medical and counselling services, but he could not give further details of confidential information.

Miss Napuk, who was engaged to be married to Jason Russell, a fellow student, ran the women's rugby team at the college. She was a prominent member of the History Society and a former vice-president of the Junior Common Room at the college, where Benazir Bhutto studied 20 years ago.

Kerry Napuk, an American businessman and his wife Angela, who live in Edinburgh, are devastated by their daughter's death. Her brother David, 20, a student at York University, said his sister may have fallen victim to exam pressure. "The system at university puts so much pressure on people to the point of this sort of thing happening," he said.

"Sarah was the greatest person I ever knew and she always will be. She was loved by everyone and she gave love to everyone. She was a great woman in every single aspect. Everyone who knew her loved her. She helped everyone she knew. She was always fighting for causes and helping to make things better for everyone."

He said his sister had returned home for Easter and appeared to be in good spirits. "She seemed okay. If she hadn't, then I would have gone back down with her," he said.

Miss Napuk was a pupil at the Mary Erskine School in Edinburgh, where she was head girl, before winning a place at Oxford. On her year off, Miss Napuk undertook aid work in the Middle East.

Thames Valley police, who are not treating the death as suspicious, said Miss Napuk's body was found by a friend who called round because she had not kept an appointment for coffee.

College friends said Miss Napuk had been very worried about her exams. One said: "She did say she was very worried about not getting a first, but I'm sure she would have got one. She said that she was going to be the only one at Harvard with a second-class degree, but I thought she was only joking."

The college had one previous suicide five years ago when a student, Tracey Cole, 18, killed herself less than a fortnight after arriving at Oxford. Miss Napuk's death comes a day after an inquest into the death of Alexander Hall, an economics student at Swansea University. Mr Hall, 20, gassed himself in his car, the inquest was told.

A recent report into suicides among students at Oxford found that the rate was 30 per cent higher than the national average for 18 to 24-year-olds. The report also discovered that suicides at the university were significantly lower than in the 20 years before and after the Second World War.

As a result of the report, which was published in 1993, the University Counselling Service more than doubled in size, individual college support systems were strengthened and newcomers to the university were offered advice on how to adapt to college life.

Miss Napuk, who had won a scholarship to Harvard, sought help for depression

Self-doubt plagues 'even most brilliant'

By David Charter
Education Correspondent

A FEW outstanding students are prone to extreme levels of self-doubt, putting their lives at risk, a senior Oxford don said yesterday. An analysis of student suicides and suicide attempts at the university showed that many of those involved simply refused to accept their own brilliance.

The Rev Dr Ernest Nicholson, Provost of Oriel College and chairman of the university's student health committee, said: "If you have an extremely talented person racked with self-doubt and low self-esteem, it can be a terribly explosive mixture."

Dr Nicholson said he vividly remembered a suicide note from a brilliant student: "I am not perfect and I cannot accept it." The note was referred to in the Hawton Report, a study of the 21 undergraduate suicides and 254 attempts between 1976 and 1990.

The report said there were varied and complex reasons for the incidents. But Dr Nicholson added: "One has to bear in mind the very sad fact that not all suicides are preventable. All too often it was someone you would least have expected."

Madeleine Portwood, an educational psychologist for Durham education authority, said suicide was ten times more likely in the run-up to exams, and that students at Oxford and Cambridge were especially under pressure. "They think that everyone is going to be let down if they don't achieve what they're expected to," she said.

Teachers who went on strike over disruptive boy may lose jobs

Matthew: doing well

By John O'Leary
Education Editor

TWO of the teachers who went on strike last autumn rather than teach a ten-year-old boy with a record of classroom disruption face the sack because so many parents have withdrawn children from the school.

The governors of Manton School in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, have issued provisional notices of redundancy to the teaching staff of eight. They meet in the next month to set a budget with the likelihood that one or two teaching posts will have to go to balance the books.

More than 20 children were withdrawn from Manton during and after last year's dispute over teaching Matthew Wilson. The school was closed for eight days when the previous governing body twice overturned the head teacher's recommendation that the boy should be expelled. The staff voted to strike rather than accept Matthew back into class. He was eventually transferred to nearby St Augustine's School, and Eileen Bennett, the chairwoman of the governors, resigned, insisting that the boy's behaviour did not warrant expulsion and claiming that the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers was using the dispute for recruitment purposes.

Neil Moore, the head teacher of St Augustine's, said that Matthew had settled in so well that he had been made a door monitor. "A lot of the problems he had were to do with the attention that he received. He told me he was determined to put that behind him."

At Manton, however, the school roll has dropped from 207 to 185 in a year and in January local authority inspectors criticised its management. The inspectors' report found that too large a share of the budget was spent on teachers' salaries.

Fred Riddell, who chairs Nottinghamshire's education committee, said that pupil numbers at Manton were likely to drop by another 20 in September, making it almost certain that the governors would have to shed teaching posts. "I warned at the time of the dispute that if there was a strike by teachers it would result in parents losing confidence in the school and would mean that some parents would withdraw their children," Councillor Riddell said.

However, leaders of the NASUWT, which represents most of the teachers at Manton, argued that it was the governors who were to blame. Eamonn O'Kane, the deputy general secretary, said: "To suggest that the teachers precipitated the problems at Manton is putting the cart before the horse. The problems were already there, and the governors ensured that the dispute went the way it did by acting in a quite disgraceful way. They focused public attention on the youngster and allowed the problems to develop."

Mr O'Kane said the union would press for voluntary redundancy or redeployment to another school, if the governors cut jobs.

☐ Parents are threatening to withdraw their children from Wawne Primary School near Hull next week if Kevin Crabb, its suspended head teacher, is not reinstated. He may face disciplinary action for allegedly slapping two pupils, although the Crown Prosecution Service has decided not to press charges.

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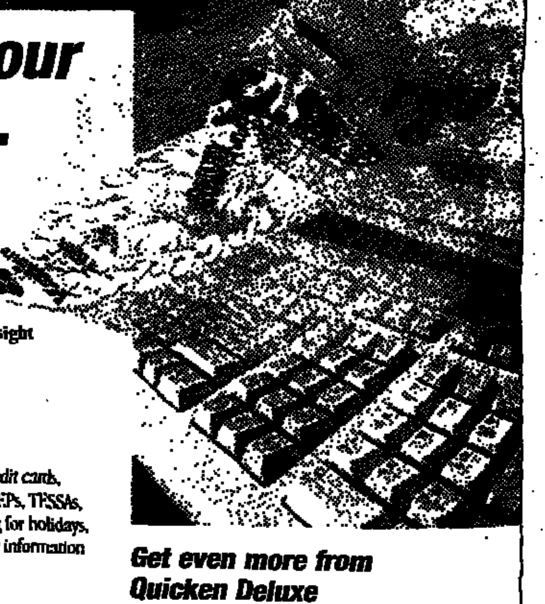

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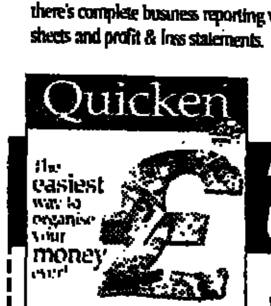

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هكذا من الاصل

‘Lost’ art hoard is found in government collection

The Washerwomen (1962-63) by Edward Burra

Byzantine Lady (1912) by Vanessa Bell

By Dalya Alberge
Arts Correspondent

THOUSANDS of paintings, drawings and watercolours whose whereabouts have been unknown for decades are in the Government Art Collection, it was disclosed yesterday.

Paintings by modern British masters such as Walter Sickert, Paul Nash and Edward Burra, which have long been on scholars' missing lists, have been hidden from public view in 500 government offices, embassies and foreign residences.

The first of five catalogues published yesterday reflected the extent of the collection: Henry Moore, John Piper and Lucian Freud are also among the artists behind 2,300 paintings, 1,800 drawings and watercolours, 200 sculptures, 50 tapestries, 235 photographs and 8,000 historical and modern prints. A reception to celebrate the publication was held yesterday at 10 Downing Street.

Wendy Baron with *Child's Head* by Joan Eardley

Hayden Phillips, Permanent Secretary at the Department of National Heritage, described the collection as boasting some of the nation's "best creative achievements in the visual arts". He noted that in the 1950s and 1960s, it was viewed as little more than "wallpapering" for the middle classes. He said it was the public's first opportunity to appreciate the range and quality of the collection. The British public, however, is unlikely to see it unless invited to government offices. "How many times does one go to a foreign embassy?" said the publisher and distributor Hugh Merrell, stressing the importance that art plays in spreading the word about Britain.

Dr Wendy Baron, who retires this month after 19 years as director of the collection, said: "People will no longer open a book and see a Paul Nash picture described as 'whereabouts unknown'. We knew it was in the collection and we wanted others to know."

The collection was established in 1898 with works extending back to Tudor portraits. The next catalogues will cover pre-20th century works. Dr Baron said that, at the turn of the century, the expenditure of £300 on works of art was defended before the Public Accounts Committee because the pictures purchased "saved a good sum in decoration of the rooms so adorned".

Being a "good civil servant", she declined to divulge much about the tastes of those in government. Recalling only that Mrs Thatcher had asked for fewer decorative pieces and fewer non-British works, she said that it was impossible to learn something about an individual from their tastes in art. "Some of those I've liked least have had the best tastes in art and vice versa." The most prized items in the collection went to 10 Downing Street and, on the whole, prime ministers made few changes.

Although there are a few "white elephants", which remain in store, the collection receives widespread approval. So much so, it was disclosed last year, that 472 works have "gone missing".

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Naomi Wolf and the rockin' years

From the permissive age of sex and drugs which promised liberation for women, to the illusion-shattering Aids era, Naomi Wolf — America's most provocative feminist — presents an intimate account of her turbulent journey of discovery . . .

THE SUNDAY TIMES
tomorrow

Boy recovers after attack in which brother died

By Dareh Gregorian

A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy who was subjected to a knife attack that killed his five-year-old brother was recovering in hospital yesterday.

Aaron Philips was stabbed in the neck and hit on the head with a hammer during the assault on Thursday night but he managed to run out of his family's flat in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, and raise the alarm in an attempt to save his brother, Perry.

Claire Lampey, who lived opposite the flat, said Aaron ran to a friend's home screaming that someone was "trying to kill Perry". She added: "Aaron was covered in blood and he was obviously injured." Police and ambulance were called but the younger boy could not be revived.

A police spokeswoman said that a woman had been threatening to blow up the flat if anyone came near by turning on the gas taps. Police were only able to enter the apartment after gas board workers turned off the supply to the house.

Aaron was last night in a serious but stable condition at West Hertfordshire Hospital.

☐ Police yesterday charged a 29-year-old woman with murder and attempted murder.

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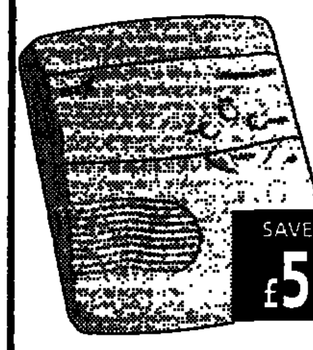

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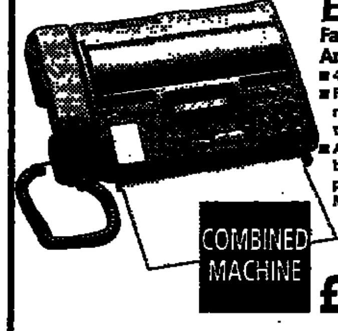

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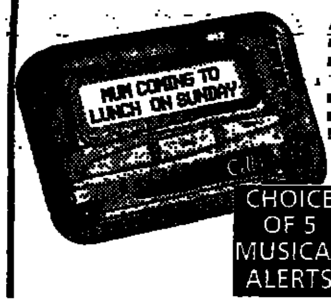

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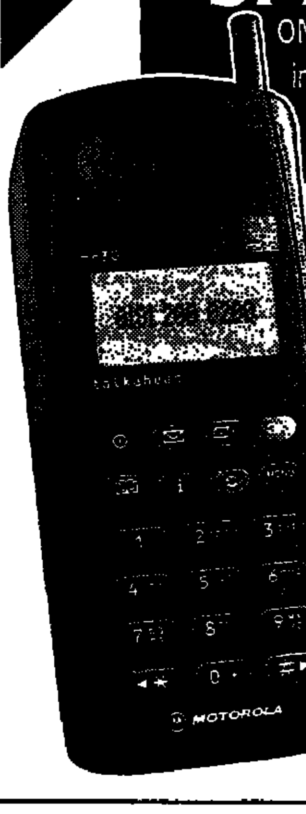

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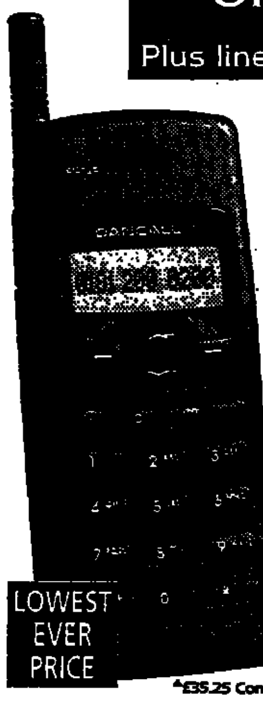

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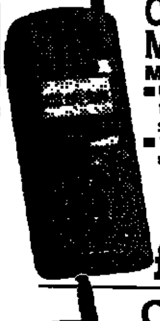

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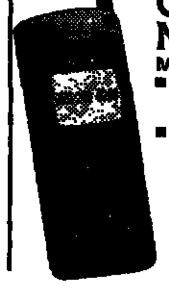

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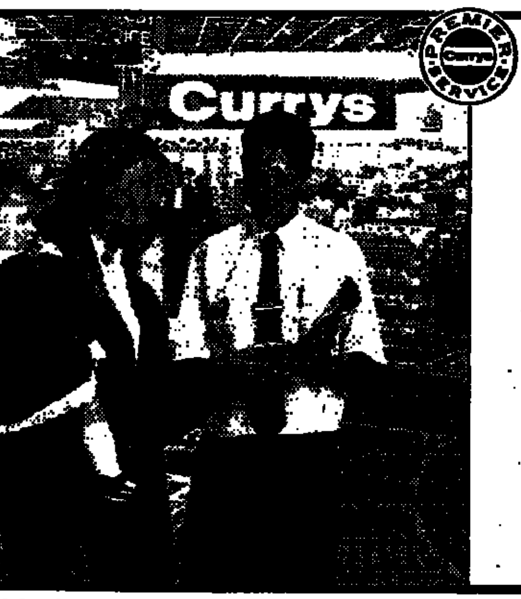

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Tribal chiefs accuse politicians of destroying their culture and traditions

Canadian Indians protest at ban on fur imports

By Kathryn Knight

Queen Victoria: gave Indians trapping rights

CANADIAN Indians visited London yesterday to demand that the Government cancel its proposed ban of fur imports.

Resplendent in traditional tribal costume, Indians from the Cree, Ojibway and Sarnia nations gathered outside Parliament and accused politicians of destroying their culture and traditions, which are based on hunting mink, beaver and fox.

Under a proposed European Union directive, which Britain strongly supports, furs from animals killed by leghold traps and other traditional methods will be banned. But yesterday Chief Ovide Mercredi, a Cree and the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, the principal Canadian Indian organisation, accused politicians of double standards and being smug about animal welfare.

After a traditional Indian cleansing ceremony in which lemongrass and sage were burnt in a shell to represent renewal, and the vapours passed from person to person with the beat of a drum, the chief said that by bowing to the demands of animal welfare activists, politicans were gradually destroying the livelihoods of the 623 indigenous communities in Canada. This led many to turn to alcohol and drugs, and commit suicide. Three quarters of fur trapped by the Indians is sold to the European market and they have no other source of income. "If the ban goes ahead the EU will be responsible for cultural genocide," Chief Mercredi said. "We have already suffered a lot and our culture is gradually disappearing. Our land is like the crofters' land in northern Scotland — most of it cannot be used for agriculture and we have very little other means of earning our livelihood."

He said many Indians were now dispossessed, living in substandard housing, with a 70 per cent unemployment rate. They had no means of developing an economy and no autonomy. Suicide rates among the indigenous peoples were four times higher than in the rest of Canada.

The chief, accompanied by Chief Ray Rogers, from the Chippewas of Sarnia, and Chief Willie Littlechild of the Ojibway, said that around 170,000 Indians would be directly affected by the ban. "When your people were listening to the animal welfare movement, what were they thinking of? They should obey the laws they make, laws which exist for the sake of humanity. No one can exist without a livelihood."

Chief Mercredi said that the directive violated an international covenant signed in 1966 which stated that in no case could people be deprived of their subsistence. It also violated treaties signed in the 19th century by Queen Victoria honouring indigenous ways of life.

"The Government should be ashamed of itself for violating a treaty made by Queen Victoria that gives our people a right to trap. Study your history and look at how much wealth you derived from the fur trade in the early days of colonisation. Now you will allow those who provided it to be destroyed."

The chief reserved strong words for the animal welfare activists. "Don't be so smug about animal rights," he said. "Our people respect the earth and the land, we respect the sacredness of all life. We pray before we set our traps and when the animal is caught. We respect all life, human and animal. We live on the Earth and give back to the Earth."

Around 5 per cent of the trappers use leghold traps but most use conifer traps, which kill more quickly. But Chief Mercredi said most Europeans missed the point on animal issues.

"I am often asked how humane our methods of killing are, and it seems by humane killing you mean killing the animal quickly. Are these the standards you employ everywhere? In that case I ask you if you know how quickly the chickens you eat have been killed, the cows and lambs?"

Earlier, the tribesmen had hoped to meet the Queen to present their case, but had to content themselves with a traditional prayer meeting outside Buckingham Palace by the Queen Victoria Memorial. The Indians, who have already visited several other European capitals, aim to disrupt celebrations at home later this year marking the 500th anniversary of the discovery of Canada, which the Queen will be attending.

DENZIL McNEELANCE

Chief Ray Rogers, left, and Chief Willie Littlechild in Westminster yesterday

Computer buff takes offence at cover-up

By A Staff Reporter

A SYSTEMS analyst who enjoys strolling naked round his garden is ignoring police warnings to cover up. Alan Raynor says he is determined to defend an Englishman's right to do what he wants in his own castle — in his case a semi-detached house.

Mr Raynor, 50, of Ledbury, Hereford and Worcester, who is divorced and lives alone, said the house next door was being renovated, "but I could have been seen from an unofficial footpath which runs past my garden.

"The fact is that anyone passing who does not like what they see can simply look the other way. So far as I am concerned, it comes down to a person's right to do what they wish on their own property. I have had no complaints from neighbours and I wasn't even aware of any gossip until police called and said there had been a complaint."

He added: "If I feel like getting up and feeling the morning dew under my feet, which I have to admit is quite pleasurable, then why shouldn't I be able to do it?

"It is not a matter of decency. I just want the freedom to walk in my garden in any way I please, look at my plants and sit on the grass if I want to."

Police warned Mr Raynor, a freelance computer software development consultant, that he is in danger of breaching the 1824 Vagrancy Act, which deals with indecent exposure. Inspector Geoff Mayor, of Ledbury police, said: "We have no wish to curtail his lifestyle but he could fall foul of the law of indecent exposure.

"If someone is in their back garden and there is a naked man next door, they could easily take offence."

Mr Raynor said privacy would be improved in the next few weeks when he replaced his sweet pea canes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Protesters appeal over eviction

Protesters occupying the site of Manchester airport's planned second runway have lodged an appeal against a court order for their eviction. The campaigners, who include the tunneller known as Swampy, yesterday lost a High Court battle to stay on the land in the Bollin Valley, near Styal, Cheshire.

Swampy, real name Daniel Hooper, is to be paid £750 to appear as Paul Merton's partner on *Have I Got News For You*, the BBC2 news quiz hosted by Angus Deayton.

Drugs charge

A man arrested by police investigating the murder of Irish journalist Veronica Guerin has been charged with drug offences. Patrick Eugene Holland, 58, of no fixed address, was remanded in custody for a week by a court at Kilmainham, Dublin.

Tube acquittal

Dorian Fallon, 23, of Southgate, north London, was cleared at the Old Bailey of endangering Tube passengers' lives. He had denied throwing a concrete slab which hit the driver's cab of a Piccadilly line train in February 1996. Nobody was hurt.

Desert runner

Chris Moon, 33, a former soldier who lost his right leg when he stepped on a landmine in Mozambique in 1995, has reached the halfway stage in one of the world's toughest events, a 145-mile race across the Sahara. He was placed 306 in a field of 355.

National cheer

The people of Aintree are being offered a free drink at 22 pubs between 1pm and 8pm today by Martell Cognac, sponsor of the Grand National, in appreciation of their generosity to stranded visitors after last Saturday's race was postponed after IRA threats.

Barristers face fines for being rude

By Frances Gibb
Legal Correspondent

RUDE or slipshod barristers may have to reduce their fees or pay compensation of up to £2,000 under a complaints system launched yesterday.

The system enables members of the public to complain about "inadequate professional services", and will be overseen by Michael Scott, an independent lay complaints commissioner. Mr Scott, a former major-general recruited after the new post was publicly advertised, said yesterday: "I am a layman so I have no legal handbaggage with me. My aim is to give a fair deal to people while protecting barristers from frivolous complaints."

The new system applies to barristers' advisory or out-of-court preparatory work, but will not deal with complaints over court performance, in line with the Bar's statutory immunity which protects barristers from being sued for negligence over their work in court.

Complainants will be able to obtain compensation only where they have suffered financial loss that would be recoverable in a court action. Losses might include wasted travel expenses and costs incurred through rectifying shoddy work. Compensation will not be paid for distress or inconvenience.

Every complaint will be vetted by Mr Scott. Where they are justified, he will seek to resolve the complaint through informal conciliation. If this is not possible, a panel of Mr Scott, two laywers and another lay person will decide if fees should be reduced or compensation paid.

The more serious complaints that appear to involve professional misconduct will go, as now, to the professional conduct and complaints committee of the Bar Council, which may decide to refer it to a disciplinary tribunal with powers to reprimand, fine, suspend or disbar barristers.

Mr Scott, whose army career included commanding the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards in the battle for Mount Tumbledown in the Falklands, said: "Inadequate professional service covers the sort of thing where a barrister has been rude, or late, or been idle about returning his papers, or been arrogant with his client, which is not, I understand, unheard of."

There are about 450 complaints a year from about 1 million cases handled by just under 9,000 barristers. About 15 per cent of the complaints resulted in disciplinary action. The scheme will apply to complaints arising since last July.

Scott: lay commissioner who will vet complaints

Bar to launch spot checks on compliance with equality code

By Frances Gibb

SPOT checks on barristers' chambers to find out if they are complying with the new Bar equality code will be announced by the chairman of the Bar today at the third Woman Lawyer conference in London.

Under the code, adopted by the Bar Council last year, chambers are expected to have fair recruitment policies in force, as well as complaints procedures about unequal treatment in areas such as the allocation of briefs by clerks.

Chambers that are found not to be complying with the code are likely to be given deadlines to put their house in order or face disciplinary action.

Robert Owen, QC, will unveil the initiative before some 300 lawyers and judges attending the conference, organised by the Law Society and the Bar, and sponsored by *The Times*. Leading legal figures taking part include Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls; Peter Goldsmith, QC, former chairman of the Bar Council; Cherie Booth, QC, just elected Legal Personality of the Year; and Helena Kennedy, QC.

The main theme of the conference is the disparity in earnings between men and women in the legal profession. A survey last year for the Law Society found that women solicitors were facing "shameful discrimination" over pay levels. Their male counterparts were found to be earning significantly more, even allowing for differences in age and experience, and the gap widened the higher up the career scale women rose.

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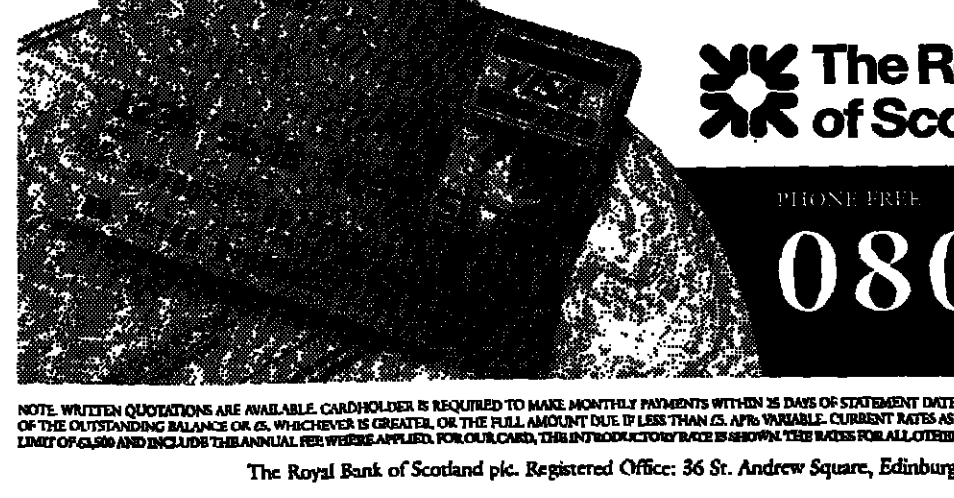

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Catholic bishops link poor exam results to poverty

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

THE gap between schools' performance in rich and poor areas will widen if unrestrained competition is allowed, according to a report of the Roman Catholic bishops of England and Wales. *A Struggle for Excellence* makes a direct link between poverty, wealth and school results.

Although not condemning league tables outright, the report calls for them to take account of other factors as well as examination results to allow parents to compare "like with like" when choosing a school for their child.

The report finds that schools with a larger percentage of pupils eligible for free meals have correspondingly lower GCSE results. Pupils at Catholic secondary schools tended to peform better than the national average, except in the poorest schools, where more than six in ten pupils were eligible for free lunches; their results were universally dismal in Catholic and non-Catholic schools. It also calls for more flexible and equitable funding for schools and for the scale of need in poor, urban areas to be recognised.

According to figures prepared for the bishops by Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, a clear correlation exists between poverty and examination results.

There are 450 Catholic secondary schools in England and Wales, 10 per cent of the total. The report analyses the difficulties and results of 27 Catholic schools in poor, urban areas through interviews with head teachers.

Although the results of most schools in the consultation were below the national average, the report looks at all the conditions facing the pupils and teachers, and concludes that "almost without exception, the participating schools appear to be succeeding against great odds".'

It cites the head of one school in an area where nine out of ten adults are unemployed and the school exists amid drugs, gangs and racism. Even though the school has no football pitch, 13 old boys have become professional footballers. Another is trying to become a haven in an area of racism, drugs and gangs. "Children try to bring all that into the school," the head says. "We have excluded 15 boys, for example for bringing carving knives into school."

In one school, where half the children get free meals, a quarter pass GCSEs and girls are kept away to care for siblings or sick mothers, the atmosphere has been turned around to the point where the school is oversubscribed.

☐ After five years' study, the bishops of England and Wales have decided not to change the Holydays when Catholics must attend Mass.

At Your Service
Weekend, page 15

MARTIN BEDDALL

Father Graham: the first Englishman to head the order for more than 450 years

Augustinian Friars break habit

By Ruth Gledhill

FATHER Paul Graham of Clare Priory, Suffolk, has become the first Englishman since the Reformation to be elected provincial of the Augustinian Friars in England and Scotland.

Father Paul will head the eight communities in the order's English and Scottish province for a four-year term, succeeding Father Seamus Ahearne of Carlisle. The Augustinian order, based in Rome, has no founder but came into being in 1256 when the Vatican brought together a group of hermits, some of whom had been following the rule of St Augustine of Hippo.

The Austin Friars, as they became known, established the first British house at Clare in 1248.

The order was dissolved in 1538 by Henry VIII but survived in Ireland. It was re-established in England in the last century, and the new province of England and Scotland was founded in 1977.

Friars at Clare Priory, a community of lay people and friars which is popular for retreats, seek to live the Christian life according to the rule of St Augustine, which emphasises the need to search for God "to achieve oneness of mind and heart".

Credo

Restraint by individual is path to true freedom

Ian Goodhardt

Jews observe the festival of *Pesach* (Passover) on April 22. This week-long celebration marks the freedom of the Jews from slavery in Egypt and the beginning of the Jewish nation as an independent sovereign entity.

Some have remarked that it seems merely to be the exchange of one slavery for another. Within days of leaving Egypt, Israel stood at the foot of Mount Sinai ready to receive hundreds of laws contained in the five books of Moses. Being subject to the laws of Pharoah or the laws of God, you are still subjugated, they say. This year Passover falls in the last full week of campaigning before the general election. I remember the late Robert Mackenzie remarking in admiration and wonder on one *Election Night Special* how smoothly the wheels of democracy turn, as by the simple mechanism of a pencil cross on a piece of paper, an entire administration is removed from office and another takes its place. No shooting, no upheaval, simply the ordinary workings of a free and democratic state, and how fortunate we were to be among the minority of the world's population who live in such freedom.

Of course, there is a lot more to freedom than being able to vote for your government. Ask the old woman too scared to leave her house for fear of being mugged, or the illiterate youngster with no prospects and no aspirations. They can vote, but how free are they?

The Jewish people are a nation forged in slavery to understand and value the importance of freedom. And what it learned from that experience is that true freedom is the very opposite of allowing everyone to do exactly what they want. That leads to what Hobbes calls the state of nature, the war of all against all, and that, in turn, leads to an inevitable impoverishment and shortening of life.

But rather than Hobbes's solution of handing responsibility for ensuring personal freedom to the leviathan of the state, Jewish teaching stresses *personal* restraint and discipline. This is the paradox of freedom: for one to be free, all must exercise discipline and restraint.

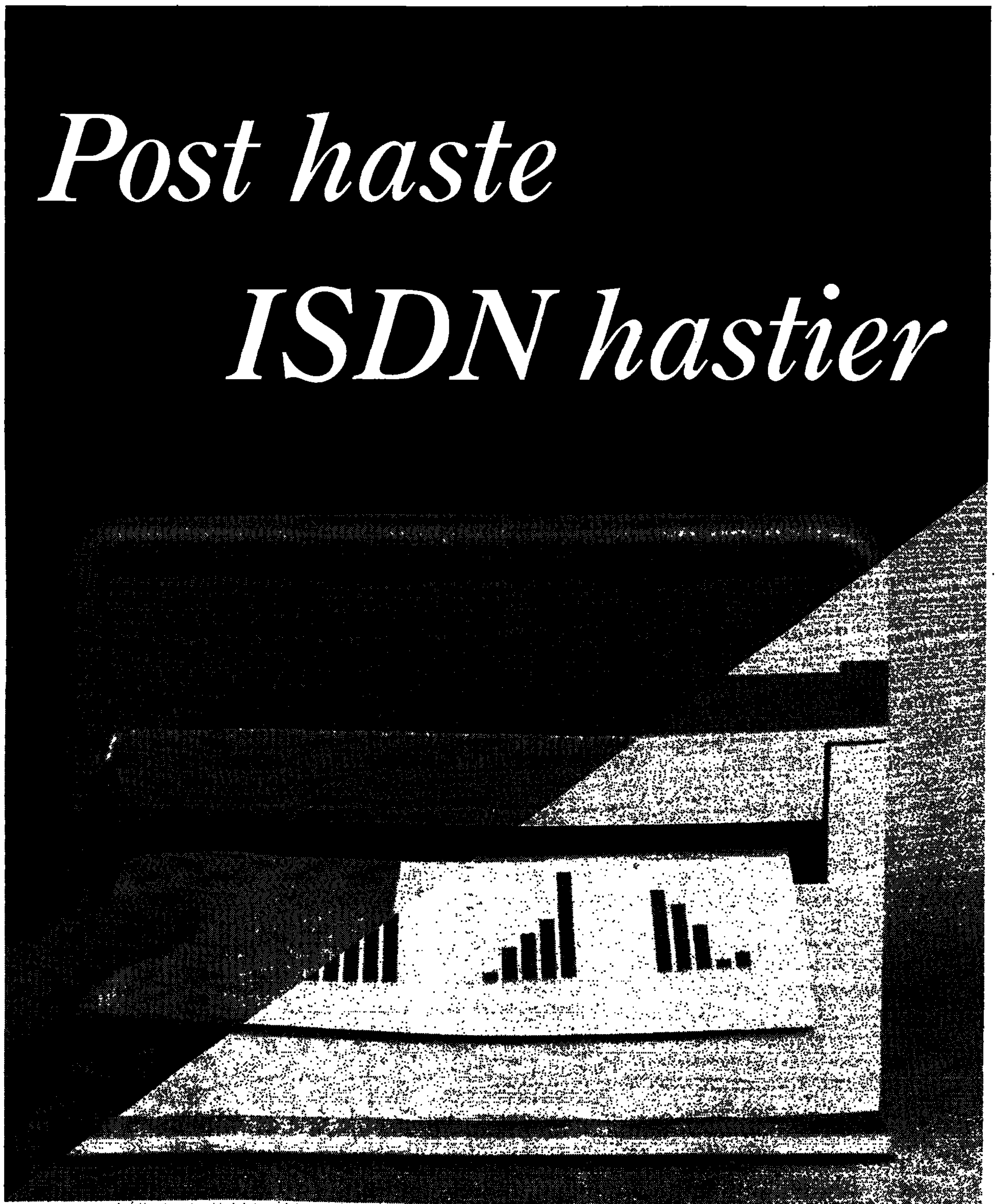
This has been the role of religion throughout the centuries. Speaking personally, I believe the teachings of the Bible to be true, and this is sufficient grounds for holding them up as the highest standards to which humanity can aspire. But even if you take a sociological, as distinct from a moral, view, the force of religious teaching has proved impressively effective in leading people to exercise the restraint in their own lives that leads to increased freedom for all.

Our society tries to do without religion, tries to leave every moral decision for the individual to work out for themselves from first principles, with no guidance, no help. The only influence it brings to bear is the coercive and corrosive force of police and prison. We can see it does not work.

Passover is the primary festival whose seasonal timing is crucial to its message. The entire Jewish calendar is constructed to ensure that Passover always occurs in spring.

When everything starts again after winter, when new life is all around, now is the time for each person to consider their own life and the life of their community, and by imposing on themselves even a little more discipline and restraint, enhance their own freedom and that of us all.

Ian Goodhardt is rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation in Leeds.



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ELECTION 97

POLL DAY **-19**

Ken Livingstone's stealthy 'Iron curtain' campaign

Michael Evans page 15

Joe Joseph page 13

Why do politicians love posing with JCB's?

Glenda Jackson's starring role

page 12

The week John Major began to hit back

MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
Labour poll lead slashed by the Tories
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
Tiverton & Honiton
In Touch
ANGELA BROWNING
THE BEST CHOICE FOR TIVERTON & HONITON
5 GOOD REASONS TO RE-ELECT ANGELA BROWNING

The week in snapshot: Labour gets off to shaky start; Bell and Hamilton cause welcome diversion; poll blow to Labour; Major starts to look happier; fillip for Labour as Browning embarrasses Tory leadership

Philip Webster and **Jill Sherman** watch Labour flutter

IN THE huge war room on the first floor of Millbank Tower last Sunday Peter Mandelson, Labour's chief strategist, laid down the law.

Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, had just used a television interview to nudge Labour's policy on the single currency to the point where it was virtually ruled out for the next Parliament.

Mr Mandelson knew that the press would immediately try out Mr Cook's new line on Gordon Brown, notably more Euro-enthusiast than Mr Cook, and to find out whether it was fully backed by Tony Blair. Surrounded by the aides who would be called on to brief all three, Mr Mandelson gave his orders: there must be no attempt to gloss Mr Cook's remarks. No impression of division could be afforded. They were carried out to the letter.

The policy was hardened overnight, with Mr Brown happily on board. It was the kind of control, the vital ingredient in Labour's usually tightly run ship, to which the political world had become accustomed. In the same room this week the strategists listened with increasing horror as the BBC lunchtime news headlined their bulletins with stories that were not good for Labour: the Jaguar chairman disclaiming endorsement of its welfare-to-work programme, and twice with the increasingly arcane saga about whether Labour intended or not to privatise the air traffic control system.

Labour appeared to have lost control of the agenda and when *The Times* MORI poll on Wednesday night showed a big dent in its lead hearts began to pound a little.

It has been a week that has proved an old adage: the team in front is always the more vulnerable. It seems almost laughable ten years on, but the Conservative machine was close to falling apart on Wobbly Thursday, one week before the 1987 election, which the Tories went on to win by 100 seats. The big opinion poll leads held by Labour for several years have always been doubled-edged. Party leaders have always known that the margins were unrealistic and expected that in the election run-up they would be severely cut back. And they always knew, too, that when that moment came they would have to hold their nerve.

What has dismayed some Labour insiders these past few days is that this supposedly brilliant Labour campaigning machine, the one that has self-consciously prided itself on winning the last two election campaigns even if it lost the election itself, has contributed heavily to its own problems.

Labour believes that there are three kinds of "switchers", those former Tory voters whose conversion, temporary or permanent, now account for the large Labour lead. There are the hard cases who have given up on the Conservatives; there are those who say they are pretty confident of going over; and there are those who are looking for an excuse to go back.

When the campaign went askew last weekend, with a series of briefings adding up to stories that Labour was doing to a U-turn on the unions and privatisation, it gave that third group their reason for returning home. They probably would have done so at some point in the campaign; but here was an early opportunity.

Labour's uncomfortable week had begun with headlines in the morning newspapers last Saturday dominated by Mr Blair's alleged insult to the Scots over the powers of their parliament.

But by then Labour was also preparing a damage-limitation exercise over expected Sunday paper stories alleging secret deals with the unions. To deflect them, the spin doctors briefed the opposite and more accurate story: that Mr Blair was to deny them much of what they wanted.

Perhaps the root of Labour's difficulties at that time had been the acknowledgement that there was a £1.5 billion hole in their finances, and what seemed to many in the party an almost indecent haste to suggest that Labour would if necessary fill the hole through privatisation.

That resulted in more Sunday stories suggesting that Labour would privatise anything that moved and led on to the great "our air is not for sale" row that refused to go away.

The message of those three episodes — no higher taxes in Scotland, no favours to the unions, no hostility to privatisation — was what Labour wanted to get across. But taken together they gave the impression of retreat and allowed John Major to begin his "campaign cracking up" charges. And that was Labour's biggest error this week. Its behaviour transformed the Prime Minister. Tetchy at the start as Martin Bell launched his assault on Tatton, Mr Major by yesterday had become a bundle of laughs. He has not behaved like a man for whom political retirement allegedly is already beckoning.

Even yesterday, after the single currency made its first serious appearance in the election campaign and raised questions over the future of ministers who breached the agreed line, Mr Major refused to be daunted. He was always happy to take questions from "you rough lot" — unlike Mr Blair, around whom a cordon sanitaire had been erected. They were keeping him away as though he was the plague, or "New Black Death" Mr Major remarked, prompting side-splitting laughter from ministers and aides, one of whom was responsible for the joke. Mr Major, with Michael Heseltine and, to a lesser extent, Kenneth Clarke, *is* the Tory campaign. When Mr Major is on form, Central Office hums. Labour privately admits that the Tory machine has been running better than it expected.

At Millbank Tower what happened this week was not so much a wobble as a flutter. Inexperience is a big factor. On that open-plan floor where each of the Shadow Cabinet has his or her "anchor" back at base, there are about 120 staff working virtually round the clock.

Most of them are young. At 49, David Hill, Labour's communications director, is the oldest. Some of them have wondered privately this week why their chiefs were not doing more to attack; where were Labour's big issues, health, education and unemployment? One or two may even have panicked at the first whiff of things going wrong. One said: "We are not doing well. They are making the hits. We are watching them." Another suggested that Labour appeared to be "going through the motions".

The campaign chiefs are urging all to keep calm. It is reported by insiders that Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown, who fell out as friends at the leadership election in 1994, are working more closely together than they have for years.

An insider said: "There is no time for old rivalries." After yesterday's press conference Mr Brown loudly congratulated Mr Cook, another old adversary, on his performance.

The campaign chiefs say that the attack strategy is in place as it has always been. The "grid", the campaign plan locked up in the offices of Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown, has not changed.

The insiders deny a rethink, but the campaign is changing up a gear this weekend. Yesterday's assault on Europe was the first sign of that.

Spin nurses keep media on message in the holding pen

James Landale and **Polly Newton** on the language of Labour's battle bus

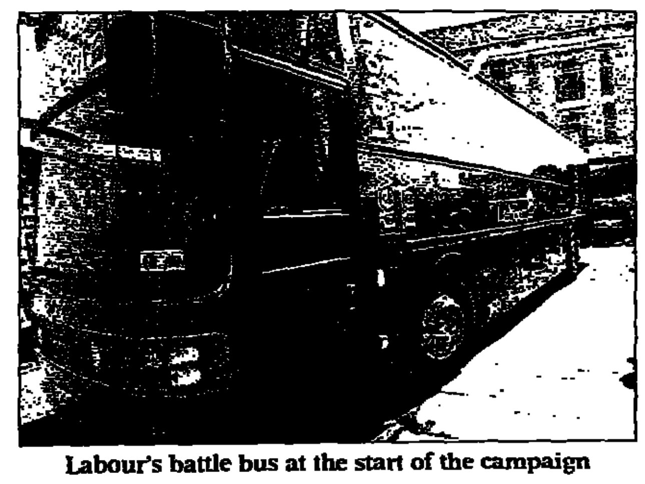
THE strange enclosed world of the election battle-bus, where spin doctors, party leaders and journalists shuttle up and down the country for up to 18 hours a day, has begun to spawn a language of its own.

The Labour camp is the most creative but all parties, after three weeks on the road, are developing a jargon impenetrable to outsiders. The *Times* correspondents on the buses translate:

Holding pen. Area cordoned off for the media during Labour's stage-managed walkabouts to prevent easy access to Tony Blair. Example: "Get back into the holding pen now!" John Major calls them *cordons sanitaires*.

Slightly corralled. Labour spin-doctor description of what happens to the media in holding pens. Example: "Of course you will be able to talk to Mr Blair. You will only be slightly corralled."

Spin nurses. Junior Labour press officers, often women, who get frustrated when the media refuse to obey them. Example: "The spin nurses are getting their knickers in a twist again."



Labour's battle bus at the start of the campaign

On message. Spin doctor-speak for stories written by reporters which faithfully follow the party's agenda and report everything their leader has said, however uninteresting. Example: "Stay on message and I'll treat you right."

Off message. Opposite of the above, usually occurs when reporters actually manage to speak to ordinary members of the public who have not all been personally vetted by a press officer. Example: "Stay off message and I'll never give you a story again."

Tight schedule. Spin doctor-speak for the apparently urgent need for the media to get back on battle bus to avoid being late for the next stop. In reality, a device to prevent reporters talking to people who might be off message (see above). Example: "We are on a tight schedule, please get back on the bus now!"

Muffins. Name given by Tory men to the hordes of young blonde women who answer the phone in the press office at Conservative Central Office. Example: "Don't worry, one of the muffins will make the tea."

Mother. Tory-speak for Baroness Thatcher. Example: "Mother is returning to the fold."

A briefette. A briefing done by Paddy Ashdown from the front of the top deck of his battle bus.

A photo opportunity. Liberal Democrat-speak for anything that involves their techno-fiend leader looking at computers.

Paddy's rally speech (Take 1). The text of Mr Ashdown's evening speech, issued to journalists under embargo in mid-afternoon. *Paddy's rally speech (Take 2).* The speech Paddy actually makes.

TB. Labour acronym for Tony Blair. Example: "TB's on the BB, the press on PB 1 and 2. ETD to ICA ASAP. Return ETA at MBT at 1430 hours." Translation: "Tony Blair is on the battle bus, the media are on press buses One and Two. Estimated time of departure for the Institute of Chartered Accountants is as soon as possible. Estimated time of arrival back at Millbank Tower (Labour's London HQ) 2.30pm.

The Stamina Factor

John Major: 54	**Tony Blair:** 43	**Paddy Ashdown:** 56
Freshness rating: HHHH	**Freshness rating:** HHHH	**Freshness rating:** HH
Miles travelled this week: 1,960	**Miles travelled this week:** 1,000	**Miles travelled this week:** 3,000
Hours spent campaigning on the streets: 23	**Hours spent campaigning on the streets:** 1	**Hours spent campaigning on the streets:** 11½
Interviews: Average 9 per day	**Interviews:** Average 10 per day	**Interviews:** Average 16 per day
Press conferences or rallies: 5	**Press conferences or rallies:** 7	**Press conferences or rallies:** 8
Average working day: 19 hours	**Average working day:** 14 hours	**Average working day:** 18 hours
Worst moment: Martin Bell announces he will stand against Neil Hamilton, prolonging sleaze debate throughout campaign	**Worst moment:** *Times* poll showing massive cut in Labour's lead	**Worst moment:** Admitting last night he was "exhausted after the first week of election campaigning at full tilt"

H Star rating out of 5 provided by Times correspondents travelling with the leaders

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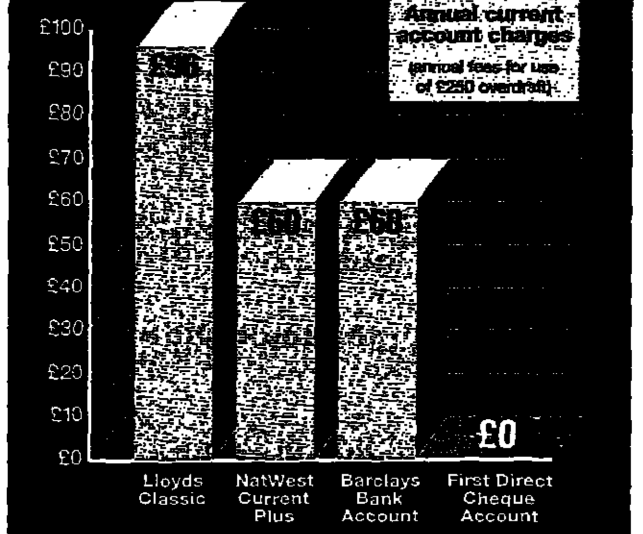

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Heseltine steps up assault with gibe over union links

By Jill Sherman

THE Tories stepped up the assault on Labour's links with the trade unions yesterday and tried to undermine the party's launch of its business manifesto.

Michael Heseltine seized on the Essex firemen's decision, announced yesterday, to strike on two days this month as an example of what would be in store under a Labour government. The firemen are opposed to cuts in the local fire service budget. Condemning the decision, Mr Heseltine said a re-elected Tory government would curb strikes in essential services.

The Deputy Prime Minister also produced a report that the GPMU print union was threatening staff at a firm in Exeter with £300 fines unless they abandoned a local agreement. He said that the union, led by Tony Dubbins, had warned them not to accept anything below the national demand and in the same document urged staff to vote Labour. "If Labour comes back, the union bully boys will come back with them," he said.

He ridiculed Labour's attempt to higglight Tory splits over the European single currency. Labour had "tried a desperate attempt to raise the temperature on Europe by giving an overblown story about an election newsletter to two newspapers"; since Labour had been planning to talk about their business manifesto, "this is further evidence of panicky efforts to divert attention from their lacklustre performance", he said.

Labour strategists denied that there had been any change of strategy. They said they would "pounce" on every Tory slip.

Mr Blair, launching his business manifesto in the City, was joined on the platform by a number of businessmen and claimed that new Labour was the "entrepreneurs' champion."

Michael Heseltine and the print union leader Tony Dubbins, who was the target of his campaign attack

New name more than window dressing in reassuring business

PETER RIDDELL

WHEN a special Labour conference approved the rewriting of Clause Four two years ago, Tony Blair joked — to somewhat strained laughter — that he was not intending to change the name of the party.

Of course, he has. It is now "new" Labour. But, perhaps, he should go further and drop the Labour altogether. The public image of the party now has no recognisable link with the trade union created party of old. The unions have been written entirely out of the script. They, and not just the striking Essex firemen, are off message.

I was treated like a character in a Bateman cartoon when I asked at yesterday's launch of Labour's business manifesto in the City of London whether a similar event was planned with the unions. Would Bill Morris, John Edmonds and Rodney Bickerstaffe be backing Labour in a televised party election broadcast as Gerry Robinson of Granada, Anita Roddick and Sir Terence Conran had done on Thursday? Mr Blair sought to deflect the question but I was assured that he had said no. I was, however, left in no doubt that it was a tactless question.

Mr Blair appears much more comfortable with businessmen rather than union leaders, other than a few forward-looking individuals such as John Monks of the Trades Union Congress. He has more respect for the new generation of enlightened businessmen, caring capitalists or, perhaps, wealth creators with a conscience. Yesterday's launch of its business manifesto was a remarkable event. There in the great hall of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Mr Blair presented an unashamedly pro-capitalist document as he and new Labour were endorsed by well-known industrialists. Of course, most senior executives are still instinctively Tories, and will vote that way, but you no longer have to be a maverick to be publicly pro-Blair. It was revealing that the statements of support yesterday by leading businessmen all focused on Mr Blair, or, in a few cases, on Gordon Brown. These executives are impressed by Mr Blair.

Afterwards, I joined the travelling circus when Mr Blair and his wife Cherie (more relaxed in person than on television) visited a factory making payphones in Croydon. There were no signs of any jitters in the Blair entourage about the plant being non-unionised with many of the workers earning just £4 at hour.

Labour does have a new relationship with much of business, and not merely in the sense that most industrialists are no longer alarmed by the prospect of a Labour government. They are impatient with the Tories, particularly because of the party's divisions on Europe.

But this puts a big onus on Mr Blair to create a business-friendly environment. So far, he has succeeded in reassuring many that Labour is no longer a union-dominated or anti-business party.

Ashdown left out in no-man's land

TV WATCH

NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT

WITH the two main parties battling to occupy the same centre ground, the Liberal Democrats brought back their Punch and Judy show for their first election broadcast last night. While John Major, as the battered wife Judy, fended off a thwack across the head from the wife-beater Tony Blair, the Lib-Dems hoped that voters would see themselves as the latchkey children of such an unhappy marriage, suffering from the slanging matches being fought above their heads.

It is an effective device as far as it goes. While the two leaders slug it out, Paddy Ashdown thinks he can steal voters in the moderate Left field who are largely apolitical, the very people who made the Social Democrats such a runaway success in the 1983 election.

Ashdown sat down with a group of public service workers who, it came as no surprise, welcomed his promise to spend more taxpayers' money on health and education. He pledged a £2 billion increase in schools spending, paid for by a 1p increase in income tax, and more for the NHS, funded by a 5p levy on a pack of cigarettes.

While concentrating on the return of tax and spend, at least for education and the health service, he did not express his party's whole-hearted support for European integration and a single currency, nor the enthusiasm for devolution not only in Scotland and Wales but throughout England too.

When the invisible forces for change sweep a country, as the polls suggest they are doing this time, it is traditionally the third party that gets squeezed, as the polls this time confirm. One of the undoubted successes of Tony Blair and new Labour is that they appear to have won over Tory voters directly to their camp.

In that case the Lib-Dems face a difficult choice. Should they hammer into the Tories, who mostly hold the seats they are capable of winning, or should they snaffle disenchanted voters by portraying Labour as the party of the status quo? To portray both parties as bad as each other betrays a lack of priorities and suggests there is a middle way between Major and Blair, even though the Lib-Dems are now clearly to the left of both of them. It is a muddle they should unravel in broadcasts to come if they are to win a significant number of seats.

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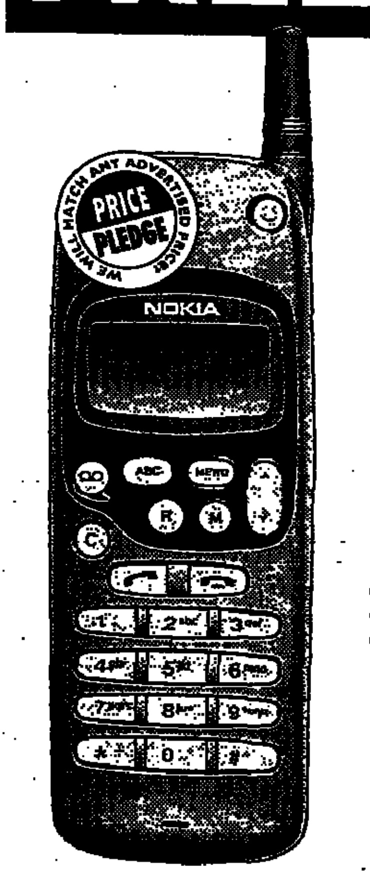

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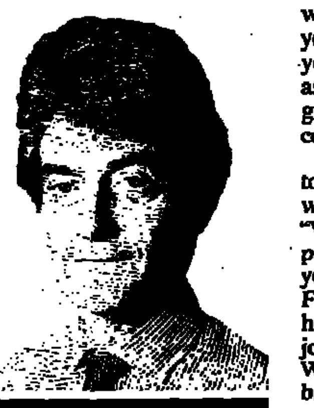
PAUL SLATER

Sebastian Coe: defending the three-way marginal of Falmouth and Camborne for the Tory party

Coe's finish leaves heckler speechless



BILL FROST

LARRY the taproom comedian chuckled maliciously with his fellow rustics at the bar as he watched the fresh-faced young man with the shandy.

"He'll need something stronger than that when the votes are counted," observed the grizzled Boris Karloff look-alike. "He's out on his ear'ole — next stop the labour exchange."

Blissfully unaware that he was not among friends, Sebastian Coe, the Olympic gold medallist and Tory candidate for Falmouth and Camborne, was speaking of his deep affection for Cornwall. "They called me a carpet-bagger before I won this seat last time, but I think that has been laid to rest," he said happily.

Larry was muttering into his beer about outsiders. "First time I have seen him in a month of Sundays. The least Seb could do is buy us a pint."

Sunlight reflected off Mr Coe's shiny new Land Rover in the car park of the New Inn at Mabe, a village on the edge of Falmouth. A party worker wondered if he should stand guard over the vehicle after observing Labour and Lib Dem posters the length of the street opposite.

It is anyone's guess who will win this three-way marginal, where both Labour and the Liberal Democrats claim to be the main challengers to the Tories. Coe's majority of 3,267 in 1992 can give him little cause for complacency.

The constituency has seen a marked decline in farming and fishing. Male unemployment in some pockets runs at well over 55 per cent. Falmouth's ship-repair yard lost a 1,000 jobs in the early 1980s. Work has picked up but only short-term and casual contracts are on offer.

Beetling his brow in a scowl, Larry reminds his mates that he was one of those sacked from the shipyard. With yet another pint on board, he is now ready to ambush the Tory candidate.

Finishing his shandy and leaping to his feet in one lithe movement, Mr Coe strides purposely from the New Inn.

Larry is not to be cheated of his moment of celebrity. Like the Ancient Mariner, he holds out a gnarled hand to halt his victim in mid-stride. "You workin' out your notice, are you — thought about what you'll do after the election?" asks Larry, to approving grunts from the assembled company.

He warms to the task of tormenting the candidate with a rambling list of gripes. "Why didn't you lot put the pensions up a bit more? Do you know that over-65s in France and Spain have free holidays? Why did I lose my job in the ship-repair yard? What are we doin' in this bloody Common Market?"

Mr Coe assumes a permasmile and answers as best he can. On state benefits and free holidays for the elderly he struggles, but Europe is his strong suit. "We've got to be in the EU — jobs rely on our membership. But we must be careful not to accept some of the baggage that goes with it."

Perhaps it is the confident smile, for by now Larry appears deflated. His friends have begun nodding in approval at Mr Coe's performance and the Ancient Mariner has lost face.

The Tory candidate treats the bar to his best smile. Larry, at first speechless, now formally admits defeat and offers his best wishes for the campaign.

"Not such a bad bloke really," he observes once Coe has gone. "Pity he's not from round here though — that would make quite a difference to his chances on May 1."

Glenda Jackson: outshone by screen rival Photograph: Robin Mayes

Jackson upstaged by Nora Batty

DAMIEN WHITWORTH

THE Glenda Jackson campaign roadshow rolled into Yorkshire looking for youth votes yesterday. Curiously some party official responsible for planning her national itinerary had decided to send her to Holmfirth, where evergreen septuagenarians frolic in the television series Last of the Summer Wine.

Holmfirth, tucked in the foothills of the Pennines, is the sort of place where you have to look very hard for the youth vote. The first stop was billed as a visit to a street stall staffed by young Labour members. The two largely bald men in their late 50s who greeted her might be young by Last of the Summer Wine standards but it was pushing credibility a little.

Ms Jackson then set off up and down the cobbled streets worn smooth by pilgrims to Nora Batty's house. She resisted the temptation to knock on the door and ask the real-life occupant if Nora was home. But she did stop by at Sid's café, which also features prominenty in the programme, and posed for pictures with a model of the woolly-hatted Compo.

One is tempted to wonder if Ms Jackson ever gets fed up with landing the show-business slots in Labour's quest for votes. If so, the joy of visiting somewhere like Holmfirth is that there is never any danger of people getting excited about her status as a double Oscar winner. She just cannot compete with her fictional screen rivals.

With still no youths in sight Ms Jackson approached a trio, whose combined age must have been at least 180, outside Sid's café. Unfortunately, they hadn't come to see her. "We've come to see Nora's house," chattered one lady.

The trio rushed over to pose for snaps with the Compo dummy and were rather bemused to find newspaper photographers ushering the lady in red into the frame as well. "I have to admit I have only ever seen about three episodes of Last of the Summer Wine," confessed Ms Jackson. "But I have always thought it was marvellous when I did see it," she added quickly.

She pottered up the narrow streets pushing leaflets through doors. A few people waved from windows but mostly the town slept.

One figure, however, was keeping a close eye on proceedings. "Apparently he's from Special Branch," said Dan Hodges, Ms Jackson's son and press officer. "It's the first time we've seen him and nobody told us he was coming ... he just appeared."

Ms Jackson has been busy performing for the party on the national stage this week desite an earlier disagreement with Labour HQ over the amount of time she had to spend away from her constituency. She had rejected the national schedule drawn up for her by party officials and insisted that the majority of her time be spent defending her slender majority of 1,440 in Hampstead and Highgate. But she had led a session of bingo in Birmingham yesterday and been to a dinner in Cardiff.

She declared she was enjoying herself. "It is always very interestng to get out and about and see people. I don't find it is true what you read that people are apathetic about the election."

The hunt for youth was forced to leave Holmfirth and turn to Batley instead. Here nothing had been left to chance as the engagement was at Batley Youth Theatre where teenagers performed a short show called Vote, which has been touring the area encouraging peers to do just that. She was clearly well satisfied to have finally found some youths.

"It is particularly interesting that they say that they weren't bothered about politics before they started doing the show but in the course of working on it they had become interested," Ms Jackson said.

Only one person seemed to have been turned off. As she moved on to the next photocall it was noticed that the Special Branch man had gone. Clearly double Oscar winners aren't worth watching all the time.

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ADAM BUTLER/DAVID JONES

When in a hole, keep digging. Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair and John Major carving out their careers at the controls of a mechanical digger, MPs' favourite route to the salt of the earth and blue-collar credibility

If you want to get ahead get a hard hat and dig for victory

Joe Joseph excavates the *subconscious desire of* parliamentary candidates to seize the levers of power and get themselves into a hole

FANCY a career in parliament but not sure if you are suited to the cut and thrust of political life? *Just answer this* simple questionnaire to find out whether you have the makings of a cabinet bigwig:
1. At a general election, a candidate's most powerful *tool is: (a) passionate* oratory; (b) passionate conviction; (c) a mechanical digger.
2. The surest way to win voters' support is through building: (a) confidence among the electorate; (b) a rapport with your constituency committee; (c) sites.
3. When seeking votes, it is important always to be hard: (a) on your opponent; (b) *headed*; (c) hatted.
4. You strongly believe that political foundations need: (a) government support; (b) business sponsorship; (c) excavating.

If you answered (c) *to all of* the above, there is a very strong chance that you could make it all the way to Downing Street. An ambitious politician cannot walk past a JCB digger without climbing into the cabin and yanking the levers. Margaret Thatcher never missed an opportunity to slap on a hard hat and vault into a cabin. Tony Blair drove around in one last September. On Thursday John Major was in one at the JCB factory in Rocester, Staffordshire, while Michael Portillo steered one through Colchester. *Is this all* just coincidence?

"Things like that are not coincidental," insists Cary Cooper, Professor of Organisational Psychology at the University of Manchester's Institute of Science and Technology. "You have to ask yourself, why are they setting themselves up in that particular circumstance? Being photographed in a school, or a hospital, you can understand. But why stand next to a digger? On a conscious level, what they think it means is 'I'm a man of the earth, or a woman of the earth. I don't just deal with the senior people. I relate to the common man'.

"The subconscious message is twofold. He's saying, one: 'I'm going to create something'. And two: 'Hey, I'm in the driver's seat. I'm in charge. There isn't room in *this* cabin for more than one of us'."

Anything else, Prof?

"Actually, yes. What is the top news item at the moment? Sleaze. And what *do* we say *about sleaze? We talk about* 'digging the dirt'. Not that *they* are digging the dirt. But they are symbolising what is going on on the political scene."

Yes, but what's so fascinating about *mechanical* diggers? Let's ask Malcolm Dyke, Britain's official Number One JCB fanatic, who has amassed a vast collection of JCB memorabilia, models and company literature.

"I can completely understand politicians' fascination with JCBs," he says. "Everyone would want to drive one. *There are 84 in the product* range at the moment. It's quite fascinating really. It's a very skilful job. You can't just get into the cab and start fiddling with the controls."

Francis Hallawell of the Quentin Bell Organisation, who advises big cheeses on their body language, has studied the pictures of MPs on diggers and decided that "the *great thing* about civil engineering equipment is that it enables politicians to swing wildly from left to right at the drop of a hard hat, while being *totally* reliant on the advice of others to give directions".

But best of all, you can make a U-turn and cover your tracks so efficiently that nobody could possibly detect that your footprints had been anywhere near the scene of the crime.

Goldsmith wins court victory on broadcasts

By Charles Bremner

THE Referendum Party was delighted by the High Court's decision yesterday to examine its claim that the big parties and broadcasters had deprived it of a fair share of electoral air time.

Party officials said they were pleased with the ruling from Mr Justice Sedley that they were entitled to have the full court investigate their claim that the Independent Television Authority had shown "too ready acceptance" of quotas that had been set by a non-statutory committee of MPs and broadcasters.

Sir James Goldsmith's party, which wants to obtain a referendum on Britain's future in the Europe Union, is incensed that it had received merely a single five-minute slot on the five main television channels while the Labour and Conservative parties have been given five *ten-minute* slots on each. The Liberal Democrats have received four ten-minute slots.

The victory, however, was modest because the judge rejected the Referendum Party's claims that the BBC had discriminated against it, and he dictated narrow legal grounds for the new hearing.

Sinn Fein hopes hit by DUP withdrawal

By Nicholas Watt

SINN FEIN'S hopes of winning four seats in the election suffered a severe setback yesterday when the Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, withdrew his party's candidates from two marginal seats.

To avoid splitting the unionist vote, he said the DUP would give the Ulster Unionists a free run against Sinn Fein and the SDLP in North Belfast and West Tyrone.

The move means that Cecil Walker, Ulster Unionist MP for Belfast North since 1983, is virtually certain to win. Willie Thompson of the UUP, stands a strong chance of winning the new seat of West Tyrone as the combined 34 per cent Unionist vote is higher than the 28 per cent won by the SDLP and Sinn Fein at last May's forum election.

David Amess

David Amess, Conservative candidate for Southend West, asks us to make clear that in saying (report, April 10) that Southend was "a civilised area with traditions", he was not implying that his old seat, Basildon, was not.

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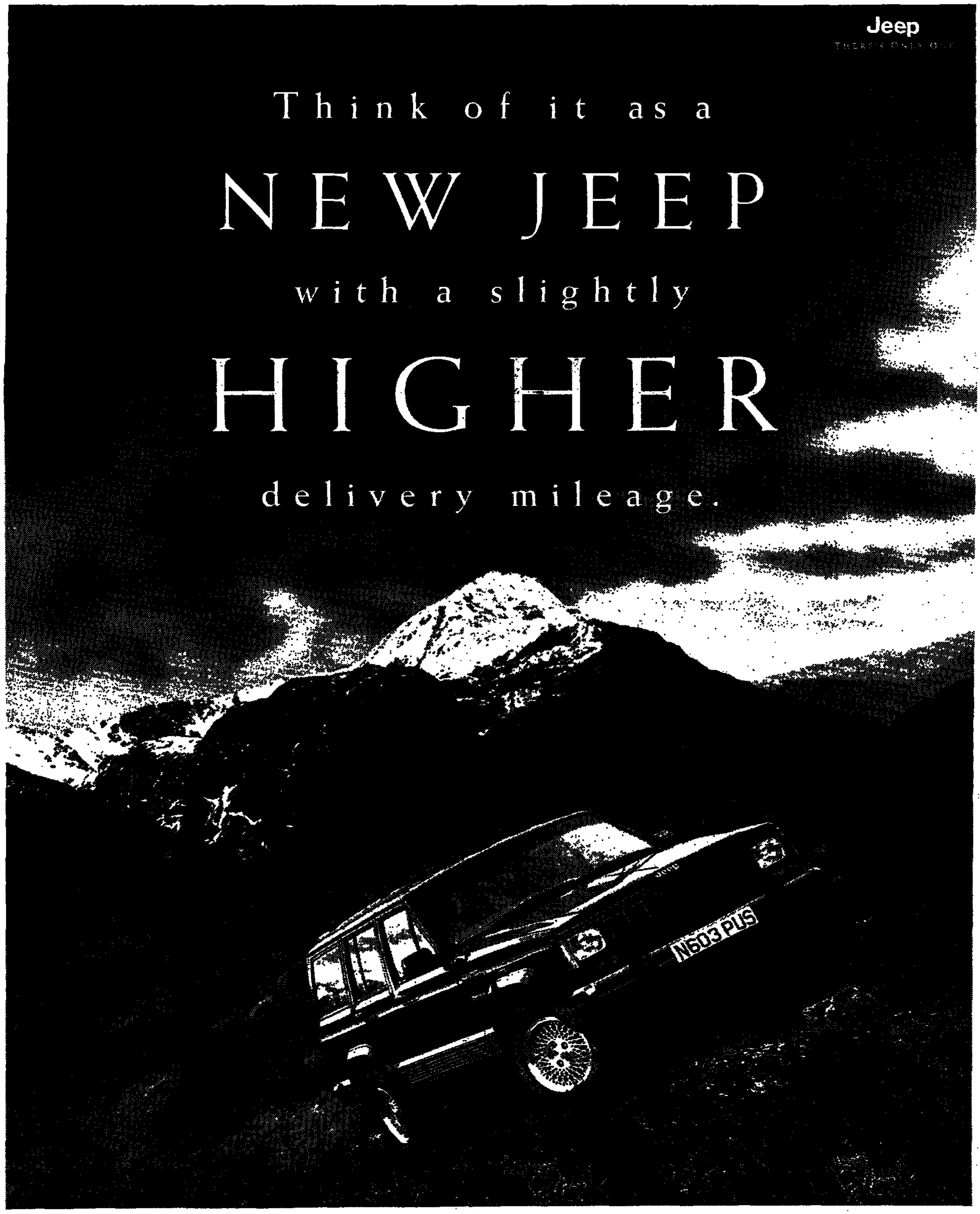

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Alexandra Frean on efforts to win over the voters who could swing several results

Parties break new ground with TV appeal to Asians

TELEVISION history will be made next week when the main parties screen the first election broadcasts aimed specifically at voters of Asian origin.

The broadcasts, which will be transmitted on the influential Asian satellite and cable television station Zee TV, are aimed at voters in the 36 constituencies where pollsters predict that the Asian vote could significantly affect the result. Leaders of the three main parties and of the Scottish National Party and the Referendum Party have also agreed to be interviewed individually by the channel.

Although the Asian community has traditionally been solidly pro-Labour by a ratio of seven to three, a recent poll by MORI suggests the emergence of a greater number of floating voters. Anita Anand, head of news at Zee TV, said: "The fact that the parties are *doing these party election broadcasts and interviews* shows that they have realised that it is simply no longer enough for politicians to go into a temple or a mosque and get garlanded. That is an empty gesture — as bad as kissing babies."

All three main parties have used endorsements from successful Asian businessmen in their election broadcasts.

By far the slickest production is from the Labour Party. It includes a contribution from Lord Paul, the Labour life peer who has built up the Caparo steel business in 31 years from a tiny operation funded by a £5,000 loan to an empire worth an estimated £500 million. He says: "The new Labour Party is a new political party which is catering to all sections of society. That's what we need in this society."

Ali Amin, the restaurateur whose eating establishments include the fashionable Red Fort in central London, also appears in the Labour broadcast. Although it is in English, it ends with Labour Party slogans read out in Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi and Bengali. Ms Anand said that she had advised the parties to make their broadcasts in Hindustani, the most widely understood language of the Asian community, but none had done so.

The Conservative broadcast features an address to voters from Lord Bagri, who rose from being a clerk in a Calcutta metals business to become the first non-white chairman of the London Metal Exchange. His family fortune is worth some £80 million. Seated in front of a portrait of John Major, Lord Bagri delivers his speech in a very "high" version of Hindi. The broadcast is interspersed with extracts from Mr Major's address to the Commonwealth Institute in January.

The Liberal Democrats' election broadcast features an endorsement from Ramesh Dewan, a publishing and property tycoon, friend of Paddy Ashdown and chairman of the Liberal Democrats' Ethnic *Minorities Group.*

The Scottish National Party broadcast, shot in the style of a pop video with fast edits and a *shaky hand-held camera,* is largely in Urdu and appears to be aimed at people from Pakistan and Kashmir living in the Glasgow Shettleston constituency, where the party is fielding its only candidate of Asian origin.

Ms Anand said that the Asian community could have a disproportionate influence on voting results because of where it lived. "Our clout does not come from our numbers, but from our concentration in specific areas."

Asian voters represent 36.1 per cent of the electorate in Ealing Southall (west London), 31.7 per cent in Birmingham Ladywood and in Birmingham Sparkbrook and Small Heath, 30.9 per cent in East Ham (east London), 26.7 per cent in Bradford West, 26.4 per cent in Bethnal Green and Bow (east London) and 23.8 per cent in Leicester South. *In Walsall South, in the* West Midlands, a constituency where the Conservatives would need a 3.2 per cent swing to take the seat from Labour, voters of Asian origin make up 14.3 per cent of the electorate. In Edmonton, north London, where Labour would need a 0.6 per cent swing to take the seat from the Tories, 4.45 per cent of the voters are of Asian origin.

Labour has traditionally fielded more Asian candidates than the Tories, but this time both main parties have ten candidates. In all, 46 Asian candidates are standing, 13 for the Liberal Democrats.

One in three Asian homes in the United Kingdom receives Zee TV. Of those, 70 per cent *do not watch other channels.*

THE ASIAN VOTE

CONSTITUENCY	Swing/party %	% Asian voters
Batley and Spen (Con)	Lab. 0.8	7.6
Bethnal Green & Bow (Lab)	L Dem 13.9	26.4
Birmingham Ladywood (Lab)	Con 25.5	31.7
Birmingham Selly Oak (Lab)	Con 1.2	5.6
Birmingham Sparkbook & Smallheath (Lab)	Con 18.7	31.7
Birmingham Yardley (Lab)	Con 0.2	3.1
Blackburn (Lab)	Con 5.5	14.6
Bradford North (Lab)	Con 7.8	14.7
Bradford West (Lab)	Con 9.7	26.7
Brent North (Con)	Lab 13.6	23.7
Brent South (Lab)	Con 13.3	20.9
Brentford & Isleworth (Con)	Lab 1.4	9.7
Croydon North (Con)	Lab 0.1	13.3
Derby South (Lab)	Con 3.7	12.6
Dudley North (Lab)	Con 0.95	4.2
Ealing Southall (Lab)	Con 4.5	36.1
East Ham (Lab)	Con 11	30.9
Edmonton (Con)	Lab 0.6	4.45
Feltham & Heston (Lab)	Con 1.3	21.6
Glasgow Govan (Lab)	SNP 7.7	10.98
Halifax (Lab)	Con 0.4	5
Harrow East (Con)	Lab 9.6	19.1
Hayes & Harlington (Con)	Lab 0.1	13.6
Ilford South (Con)	Lab 2.4	23
Leicester East (Lab)	Con 11.3	31.5
Leicester South (Lab)	Con 8.8	23.8
Luton South (Con)	Lab 0.5	13.5
Mitcham & Morden (Con)	Lab 1.7	5.3
Oldham East & Saddleworth (Con)	Lib Dem 0.5	3.2
Pendle (Lab)	Con 2.0	7.1
Rochdale (Lib Dem)	Lab 0.1	10.7
Slough (Lab)	Con 0.0	18.7
Walsall South (Lab)	Con 3.2	14.3
Warley (Lab)	Con 9.4	15.9
West Ham (Lab)	Con 14	20.20
Wolverhampton Southwest (Con)	Lab 4.7	13.4

Information supplied by Zee TV

Above, the team who made the SNP election broadcast; below, Dr Sheila Cheeroth, a GP, in the Labour broadcast, Lord Bagri for the Conservatives, and Anjan Gupta, a businessman, in the *Lib Dem broadcast*

Labour risks losing its grip on an upwardly mobile minority

RESEARCH suggests that British Asians, who contribute £5 billion to the economy each year, are shifting their allegiance from Labour as their prosperity grows (Adrian Lee writes).

Nevertheless, seven out of ten voters of Asian origin still said in a MORI poll that they would vote Labour.

There has been a significant increase in the number of parliamentary candidates of Asian origin. More than 40 are expected to stand and, *so far, the Liberal Democrats* have the largest number. In some inner-city constituencies, Asians comprise 30 per cent of the electorate and their turnout is usually as high as 80 per cent.

But analysts have also noticed dissatisfaction among young, third-generation Britons from Asian families who feel disenfranchised. Like many young black people, they *reject* the British political system as racist and will not vote.

Dr Peter Patel, of *Birmingham, has set up the* Fourth Party, which plans to field up to four candidates in the Midlands, campaigning for better representation for Asians in Parliament.

There are 36 constituencies where the number of voters from the Asian community is higher than the majority secured by the winning party at the last general election. The so-called West Midlands corridor has the largest concentration of Asian voters and marginal constituencies and will be a key region, as will Yorkshire.

Rivals unite against racists

By Shirley English

POLITICAL rivals in the Glagow seat of Govan put party differences aside yesterday in an attempt to drive the British National Party out of the constituency.

Labour, the Scottish National Party, the Scottish Socialist Alliance and trade union leaders united to condemn BNP plans to field Jim White, originally from Ayrshire, at the election.

Labour and the SNP are locked in a fierce battle for the seat. In 1992 the SNP won 37 per cent of the vote, against Labour's 49 per cent. This time the SNP hopes to capitalise on local Labour splits.

Yesterday, however, the rivals rose above party politics. They agreed that it was no accident that the BNP was *targeting* Govan, which, if Labour wins, will return Britain's first millionaire Muslim MP, Mohammed Sarwar. *About 10 per cent of the voters* are Asian, mainly Muslims, with a large number of Sikhs. The BNP advocates forced *repatriation of "immigrants".*

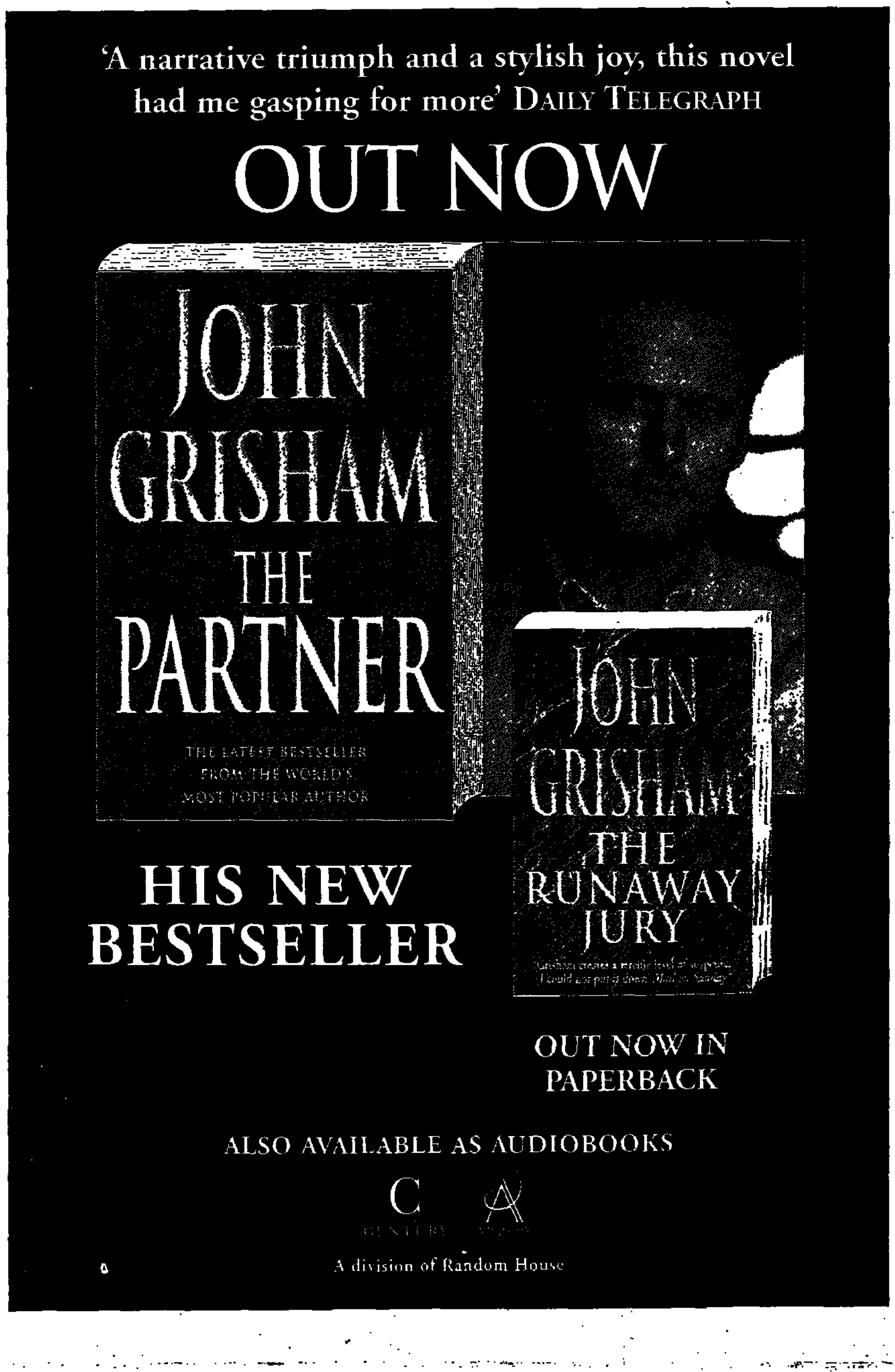
The three parties pledged not to share any platform with the BNP candidate, and said the organisation *should not be* treated as a legitimate party. They also said they would support any action by postal workers who refused to handle BNP leaflets in the area, and called on the media not to give the party a platform.

Nicola Sturgeon, for the SNP, and Alan McCoombes, for the SSA, both said they did not want votes from anyone who objected to Labour's candidate on racial grounds.

Major defied on immigration

A Tory candidate defied the party leadership yesterday by including in his manifesto his opposition to any relaxation in immigration laws

Voters in Wolverhampton South West will receive leaflets from Nicholas Budgen in which he states that immigration has changed whole communities and created "substantial social problems". John Major has said he does not want race to become an election issue.



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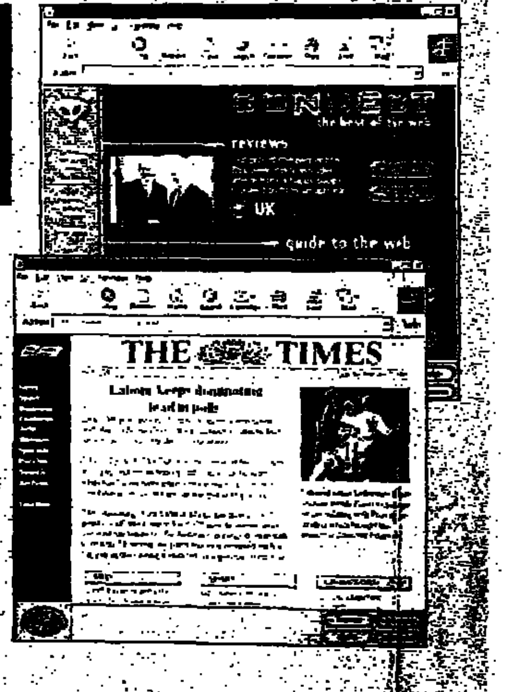

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CHANGING TIMES

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Blair's trust lies mainly in quality of his own choice

Michael Gove on how Labour is conducting its search for enough "suitable" people to form a credible government front bench

TONY BLAIR may be about to secure sweeping victory at the polls, but while he trusts, just, to democracy to deliver the right result across the country he does not within the Labour Party.

In order to secure quality candidates who can cope adequately with ministerial responsibilities, the Labour leadership has had to bypass the usual selection process by creating new pocket boroughs. Old, in every sense, Labour MPs are having their mouths stuffed with ermine in order to make way for figures handpicked for high office.

The process of evicting oldtimers and installing new boys and girls has been masterminded by Sally Morgan, an aide in Tony Blair's office with responsibility for party relations. Ms Morgan, a former Labour Students organiser and one time head of campaigns at Labour headquarters, has herself been linked with the Tooting seat held by Tom Cox, 67.

Already the Tory defector Alan Howarth, and Yvette Cooper, a former *Independent* leader writer, have been secured the seats necessary to smooth their way into ministries. One other possible beneficiary is the radical barrister and broadcaster Helena Kennedy. Ms Kennedy, according to Millbank fixers, has been mentioned in connection with Dudley North where John Gilbert is retiring. The Labour leadership, apparently anxious at the dearth of legal talent in their parliamentary ranks, need to make a successful professional lawyer Attorney-General.

The Labour leadership, however, like O.J. Simpson, needs more than just one good lawyer. The Blairites want a whole "dream team" of outside talent parachuted in to take on jobs which MPs of the old intake are insufficiently able, or ideological, to cope with.

One Labour strategist said before recent resignations: "There could be a real problem in government finding enough good people to do the jobs. Look at the front bench outside the Shadow Cabinet, how many of them are effective? There are so few signed up to the project that we are debating whether they should be concentrated in new Labour priority areas like Health, Social Security and Education or areas where they will have to be good to hold their own with outsiders, like the DTI and Foreign Office."

There is another reason for putting old workhorses out to pasture in the Lords. As one Labour candidate said: "What we want are dependable lobby fodder." Although Labour will require talented frontbenchers in the Lords, what the elevation of former MPs will provide are whippable souls with no commitments on the *South Bank Show*.

Labour may yet need many more biddable backbenchers in the Upper House. There is a convention, established in the Forties, that the Lords does not frustrate a Government's manifesto commitments. Yesterday, however, Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, raised the possibility of the Tory majority in the House of Lords sabotaging Labour's constitutional legislation. He was hoping to head off Labour's plans to restrict the time devoted to debating devolution on the floor of the House of Commons. Labour may have to create, or at the very least threaten, a new red army on the red benches if it is to get its Bills through.

Cooper, above, selected, and Kennedy, a possible Attorney-General

Since the election was called, seven Labour veterans have announced that they are standing down and one party insider hinted others would pick up their carriage clocks this weekend. One of those tipped to retire is Tom Pendry, who has represented Stalybridge and Hyde since 1970 and is a friend of Mr Blair. Another is the 73-year-old member for Ashton-under-Lyne, Robert Sheldon.

Some of those MPs who have retired, such as the former Cumbernauld member Norman Hogg, have already been replaced. The shortlist from which Mr Hogg's successor was chosen was drawn up, because of the proximity of the election, by the party's National Executive Committee rather than the constituency party.

Shortlists allow the activists a choice and new Labour strategists never like leaving anything to chance. That is why there has been a spate of eleventh-hour resignations. Former MPs who announce their retirement after the posters have been printed may annoy local activists, but they turn their seats into Mr Blair's property. With a few short days to go before nominations close on the 16th, the party leadership has the power to impose the candidate.

An impeccably Blairite union figure like Alan Johnson, of the UCW, may be able to secure selection, but he is the exception that proves the rule. The failure of Jack Dromey, Harriet Harman's husband and a Transport Union official, to be shortlisted in Pontefract is a surer indication of Mr Blair's plans for the unions: the carthorses will be taken to the knacker's yard.

One Blairite candidate believes that the most significant proof of Labour's intention to move away from the unions is not yesterday's business manifesto but a document called *Party into Power*. He said: "It was written by Sally Morgan for the NEC. It is intended to prepare the way for the removal of union seats on the NEC and the ending of union sponsorship."

Labour, it is claimed, could survive financially with state funding and support from businesses which prefer Labour's more pro-European position. Whether it can survive politically cut off from its roots is a different matter.

SIMON WALKER

Ken Livingstone enjoying the campaign yesterday in Brent East, where he invited members of the public to barrack the man from *The Times*

Livingstone lets fly from behind his iron curtain

Michael Evans in the front line of a cold war waged by new Labour's latest recruit

KEN LIVINGSTONE was in mischievous mood yesterday, extolling the virtues of new Labour by megaphone and telling the electorate in his Brent East campaign constituency that Tony Blair would make "the finest Labour prime minister since Clement Attlee".

Mr Livingstone, regarded as unreconstructed old Labour, is keeping quiet about his real feelings on how the Labour Party has changed under its new leader. Yesterday, to prove his pedigree as a loyal campaigner, he was busy distributing leaflets that promised "new Labour, new Britain".

In anticipation, however, that members of the press might try to use his campaign words to impede the Blair revivalist bandwagon, he has imposed an "iron curtain" (his words) around the constituency to try to freeze out reporters seeking interviews. On the telephone in his campaign office, the dilapidated London Apollo Club in Willesden, northwest London, he insisted that he would say nothing until May 2.

However, when *The Times* caught up with him yesterday as he canvassed in Carlton ward — a run-down, crime ridden area largely populated by council tenants — the loquacious Mr Livingstone could not help reverting to his more traditional knockabout comedy act.

He used megaphone diplomacy to invite the locals to come and have a go at the representative from *The Times*. "Now is your chance to come down and beat up a stooge from the capitalist Murdoch press," he declared, informing a largely absent audience that all *Times* reporters were paid £60,000 a year. No one took him up on the offer, which he described as a legitimate blood sport.

Despite his polite refusal to talk to the press during the election campaign, he was soon affably chatting about doorstep responses he had been getting, including one from a Tory voter. "He said he couldn't vote for someone like me but he just wanted to get rid of the Tory Government."

Back on the megaphone, Mr Livingstone told anyone who cared to listen that it was time for the Tories to go; they had been caught with their hands in the till. A lone voice from an office block shouted: "Shut up."

An elderly woman who had recently been mugged told Mr Livingstone that she would not vote for him or any of the candidates because no one had cared when she had been assaulted. Mr Livingstone, who is nurturing a majority of just under 6,000, took the opportunity to tell her what Mr Blair would do.

Mr Livingstone suggested that *The Times* interview two of his rivals. He said: "Go and see Stan Keable [from Arthur Scargill's party]. He wants world revolution today. Or the Tory candidate, he's an arms dealer." The latter, Mark Francois, a Basildon man, said that he was a defence adviser, not an arms exporter.

In one of his campaign leaflets, Mr Francois, 31, lists five issues on which he and Mr Livingstone are at opposite ends of the political spectrum. Mr Francois wants a constitutional monarchy and the survival of the pound. Mr Livingstone, he says, wants a republic and a European single currency.

He said: "Mr Livingstone and I are like chalk and cheese but we've had good public debates together on the main issues. The trouble is, he is handing out leaflets promoting new Labour but in the debates he goes on about all the old Labour stuff."

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Yogic flyers reach new height of political ambition

Only one party is offering the voters "bubbling bliss". **Ben Macintyre** meditates on its manifesto, and concludes that it is the *same old pie in the sky*

CHRIS HARRIS

The bottom line: Dr Geoffrey Clements and his party's manifesto — a "blueprint to create heaven on earth"

THREE intensely serious men in suits yesterday laid out an electoral platform calling for the establishment of an army of 7,000 "Yogic Flyers" who, by bouncing up and down on their bottoms and practising transcendental meditation for 20 minutes *twice daily*, would "create a happy, prosperous, problem-free nation".

The launch of the Natural Law Party manifesto marks a critical moment in the campaign, setting a standard against which all other electoral gobbledygook can be measured. The party's manifesto is the most ambitious on offer, being nothing less than a "blueprint to create heaven on earth".

The party is fielding 300 candidates, an advertising blitz similar to its £2 million campaign at the last election is about to get underway, and George Harrison, former Beatle and the most prominent backer of the party, remains firm in his support, we were assured.

The 120-page manifesto, presented by Party leader Geoffrey Clements in the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in London yesterday, is a complex, heavily adjectival document with lots of diagrams, but broadly it goes like this: "Natural Law is the intelligence and infinite organising power that silently maintains and guides the evolution of everything in the universe." In other words, a sort of cosmic Peter Mandelson.

The key to unlocking this law, and thus eliminating the "stress, frustration, sickness, crime, violence and all other forms of negativity that beset society", is transcendental meditation and yogic flying.

Dr Clements flatly refused to fly for the cameras, while promising a demonstration at a later date. But judging from the illustrations, you cross your legs in the yoga position and then bounce, attaining an altitude of up to three feet, which must be murder on the coccyx but apparently produces a sensation of "bubbling bliss".

A team of 7,000 yogic flyers taking off twice a day would, it is promised, provide enough bubbly for all the rest of us. This would somehow spread Natural Law through the national consciousness, ending world conflict and making it easier for everyone to get up in the morning. All those in power should take it up and make "brain-functioning more efficient", Dr Clements, who has a PhD in physics, said.

"Even the Queen?" we asked. Dr Clements was firm: "*Anyone* who takes a position of responsibility."

The wackiest aspect of the Natural Law Party is their studied unwackiness. They are trying so hard to be natural it is frightening. The three senior party officials have the air of introverted and faintly undernourished chartered accountants.

Deferentially, sombrely, Dr Clements laid out the figures. The number of yogic flyers required for a given number of people is the square root of one per cent of that number. Four thousand scientific studies prove this, he said. Thus Britain could get by with a mere 800 aficionados, but since this is an international effort, the party has arrived at the figure 7,000, that being the square root of one per cent of the entire world population.

Why, the press asked, if the Maharishi Effect happens anyway, doesn't the party use the funds it will waste on this election to rent a big field, bring together all the yogic high-flyers and just get on with it? Dr Clements said this objection was "superficial".

I reeled out of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors feeling as I always do after a session with the accountant: confused, obscurely guilty and glad to be leaving all that to someone else.

After seeing genuine conviction close up, false or merely convenient professions of belief that are the true currency of by real politicians seemed a blessed relief. Give me a lying spin-doctor, an evaded question, some fake earnestness, a healthy cynic.

But it was good to see the Natural Lawyers again, a sign that the waves are washing as normal on the wilder shores of our democracy, that the constellation remains unchanged in the outer galaxies beyond our ken.

Like Hale-Bopp, the Natural Law Party will streak across the election firmament at precisely the expected time and place and then disappear from sight for another election cycle, leaving behind a long tail of lost deposits that will be visible from other planets.

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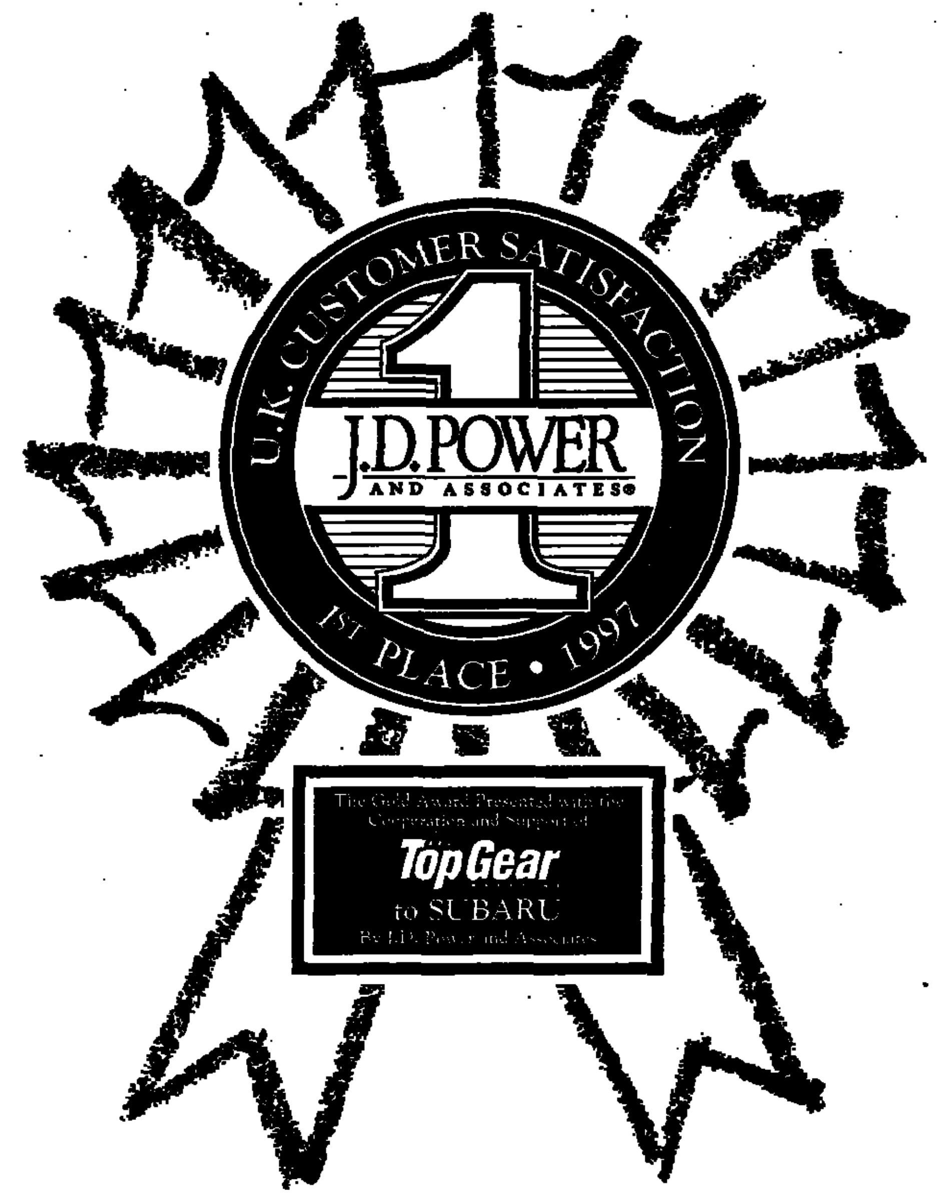
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Greens persevere with lofty ideas

By Alan Hamilton

LAST month the Green Party launched its election manifesto, but nobody took a blind bit of notice. They had another go yesterday; attendance was still thin, but was boosted by Jake the black labrador, which roamed the conference room alertly until they began talking about proportional representation, when it fell asleep.

The Greens are the party of world order and loft insulation. This means withdrawing from Europe, banning factory farming, reducing traffic, banning all nuclear technology, writing off Third World debt and lots more glass fibre matting in the attic.

A *future ideal green world* would include the replacement of employers' national insurance contributions by taxes on pollution, a 10 per cent reduction in road traffic by 2010 and a Bill of Rights establishing in law the individual rights of citizenship.

Green policy in many areas is vague, more eau-de-nil than emerald, but on the loft issue it is precise. The Greens want a reduction in the VAT rate on energy-saving materials such as loft insulation to 8 per cent.

One problem with the Green Party these days is that *it lacks familiar faces*. It was suggested by mischievous reporters yesterday that they could do worse than adopt Swampy, at present deeply entrenched at Manchester airport. Swampy, they retorted, did not qualify because he was not a Green Party member.

The other trouble with Swampy is that, as he lives in a hole in the ground, he has a less than consuming interest in loft insulation.

"Where will I find my ideal partner?"

See p.28 Weekend

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Germans neglected British tip-off on Iran killers

FROM *ROGER BOYES*
IN BERLIN

THE British Secret Service tipped off German police about the suspicious activities of an Iranian assassin shortly before his hit team attacked and killed Kurdish dissident leaders in a Berlin restaurant. Had the German authorities acted on the information, it might have been possible to *prevent the murders* — and to keep alive relations with the Iranian regime.

Instead, Thursday's jailing of four members of an Iranian murder squad — including the agent, Kazem Darabi, 38 — seems to have torpedoed Europe's policy of "critical dialogue' with the Tehran Government. The British connection emerged yesterday as lawyers began to *speak for the first time in* the 3½-year case.

"It is clear that the British were keeping *track on people like* Darabi, who have been posing as businessmen." said a German *lawyer in* Berlin. "What is less clear is why the Germans did not act promptly enough." The Kurds were killed on September 17, 1992, during a Socialist International session in Berlin. Darabi — who had been suspected of acting against Iranian emigrès before — *had drifted in and out of the sights* of German counter-intelligence. In the autumn of 1992 he appears not *to have been under surveillance.* The police blunder is only one of several puzzling aspects of the case: who, *for example*, betrayed the Kurds as they sat down to dinner?

The hit team, equipped by Darabi, received a telephone call from someone close to the murdered Kurdish leader, Sadegh Sharafkandi, shortly before they left for the restaurant. This Iranian *spy has never been tracked down* and his presence still breathes suspicion among exiled Iranians.

The principal killer was identified by the court on Thursday as an Iranian called "Sharif". He *disappeared soon after the killing*, flew to Turkey and then on to Iran where, according to German intelligence, he was awarded a Mercedes 250 limousine for his services.

Perhaps to make up for leaving so many loose ends, German intelligence has launched a huge operation against Iran. According to *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* — *well informed on Iranian affairs* — Germany has embarked on one of the biggest telephone-bugging *operations since* the Cold War. All telephone communications between Germany and the Islamic *Republic of Iran have been monitored* since November, as have telephone conversations by *suspect* Iranians and their sympathisers within Germany. All fax, telephone and telex communications from the Iranian Embassy have been tapped.

The German intelligence service has, however, been having problems transcribing and evaluating *the tapes* because of a *shortage* of Farsi speakers. Diplomatic sources say Israeli intelligence experts have been helping *the Germans*, especially with the breaking of codes.

The failure to act on the British *tip in 1992 is* being blamed on the Berlin branch of the German counter-intelligence agency. Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, tried yesterday to calm down the irritated atmosphere between Iran and Germany. "It is a very emotional situation and my job is to contribute to calm, and not to unrest."

The massive *monitoring* of communications with Iran *is in* vivid contrast to the red-carpet treatment given by the Germans to Ali *Fallahian, the Iranian Intelligence* Minister, when he visited intelligence and counter-intelligence headquarters in Munich and Cologne as recently as 1993.

The trial documents make quite plain that the Iranian hit team would never have been successfully prosecuted without the work of German intelligence. The most influenctial witness for the prosecution was an Iranian secret police defector, identified only as Witness C, who laid bare the workings of *the Iranian assassination squads*.

Rafsanjani says storm with Europe will pass

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

PRESIDENT Rafsanjani of Iran yesterday denounced a Berlin court's verdict *that* Iranian leaders had ordered political murders in Germany, but dismissed a diplomatic row with Europe as a "passing storm" provoked by the United States and Israel.

He said Germany's economic interests could suffer as a result, but there were no specific threats of retaliation in his address to thousands of worshippers at Friday prayers.

"The Germans broke the *hearts of millions* of *Iranians* with this verdict and they are going to suffer for it," President Rafsanjani said. "I am not saying they will lose *everything they have here*, but their position here will definitely be weakened." He described the "politically motivated" trial as the "most scandalous event in Western history".

After prayers, several hundred members of Ansar-e-Hizbullah, street bullies most*ly employed to ensure people* dress and behave modestly, protested outside the German Embassy in the capital, stopping on their way to chant "Death to Rushdie" outside the British Embassy. The mob pelted the German mis*sion with tomatoes*, but an attempt to storm the building was repelled by riot police.

As senior European diplomats, including Britain's Chargé d'Affaires, Jeffrey James, prepared to fly home for consultations, Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani scornfully recalled a diplomatic exodus in 1989. "Was it not so in the Salman Rushdie affair that all of them recalled their *ambassadors and later* disgracefully sent them back with apologies?" he said.

The uproar after a ruling on Thursday in Germany that Iran's political leadership had ordered the murder of four Iranian Kurdish dissidents in 1992 would soon subside, President Rafsanjani said. "They [America and Israel] needed such a propaganda wave. We should expect them to keep up the noise in the West. But this will bring them *nothing*. It is like a thunderstorm that brings clear weather in its wake."

Privately, however, Iranian Foreign Ministry officials expressed dismay at the rupture in relations with Europe, which the Government has *courted as a desperately needed* counterweight against US attempts to isolate Iran.

There has been no reaction so far from the holy city of Qom, where hardline mullahs last November hinted that the German prosecutor could face a fatwa *similar to the one* imposed on Mr Rushdie, the writer. Many Iranian businessmen also hope Iran's regime will swallow its pride and do nothing more to antagonise Germany, Iran's main trading partner.

EPA

Iranian protesters with a poster of the late Ayatollah Khomeini converge on the Germany Embassy in Tehran yesterday after Friday prayers

Parents of disabled 'impure', says bishop

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

GROUPS representing mentally and physically handicapped people were furious yesterday over an assertion by Bishop Javier Echevarria, head of Opus Dei, the influential Catholic organisation, that most disabled people are offspring of "impure parents" *who had had sexual relations* before marriage. At a meeting in Sicily of 1,500 Opus Dei followers, Bishop Echevarria was quoted as saying that "according to scientific research" 90 per cent of handicapped people had been born to parents who had "not entered *into marriage in a pure state*". Opus Dei sources said the bishop thought he was at a closed meeting, but the *Giornale di Sicilia* newspaper *reported* his *remarks*.

Opus Dei, regarded with suspicion by liberal Catholics as a powerful, even sinister, right-wing organisation, has the support of the Pope, who beatified Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, its founder, in 1992 despite critics saying that Escriva *had not led the necessary* "exemplary life".

Opus Dei officials said that Mgr Echevarria, who is Spanish, had been referring "not to handicapped people in the broad sense" but to Aids and "HIV-infected children born to HIV-infected parents". There may have been "misunderstandings" over his remarks, during an address on the need for purity in marriage, because of his "poor Italian", *officials said*.

The Italian Down's Syndrome Association expressed "horror and unease", and called on the bishop to apologise "to the handicapped and to those who care for them".

Cardin: restaurant owner

Maxim's turns into wine seller

FROM ADAM SAGE
IN PARIS

MAXIM'S, the Paris restaurant, is planning to sell 8,000 "exceptional" bottles of wine in the biggest auction of its kind held in France.

Pierre Cardin, the fashion designer who owns Maxim's, is likely to make several million francs from the auction. He has decided to market some of the most prestigious bottles from the restaurant's 100,000-strong cellar, including "mythical" wines such as Lafite, Haut-Brion, Margaux *and Mouton-Rothschild*.

With experts telling M Cardin that it will take 40 years for diners to drink all the bottles owned by the restaurant, *he has* "decided to put a selection at the disposition of the public". Some of the bottles, such as a 1945 Mouton-Rothschild, are expected to fetch Fr30,000 to Fr40,000 (£3,200 to £4,200) each.

Maître Jacques Tajan, the auctioneer in charge of the sale, said: "All the wines are *prestigious and they have also* been well conserved. I am extremely demanding." He said he hoped to better the Fr3.3 million record for a French wine sale.

The auction comes at a time when Maxim's is struggling to live up to an illustrious past, with food critics attacking its menu and some clients angered by recent changes.

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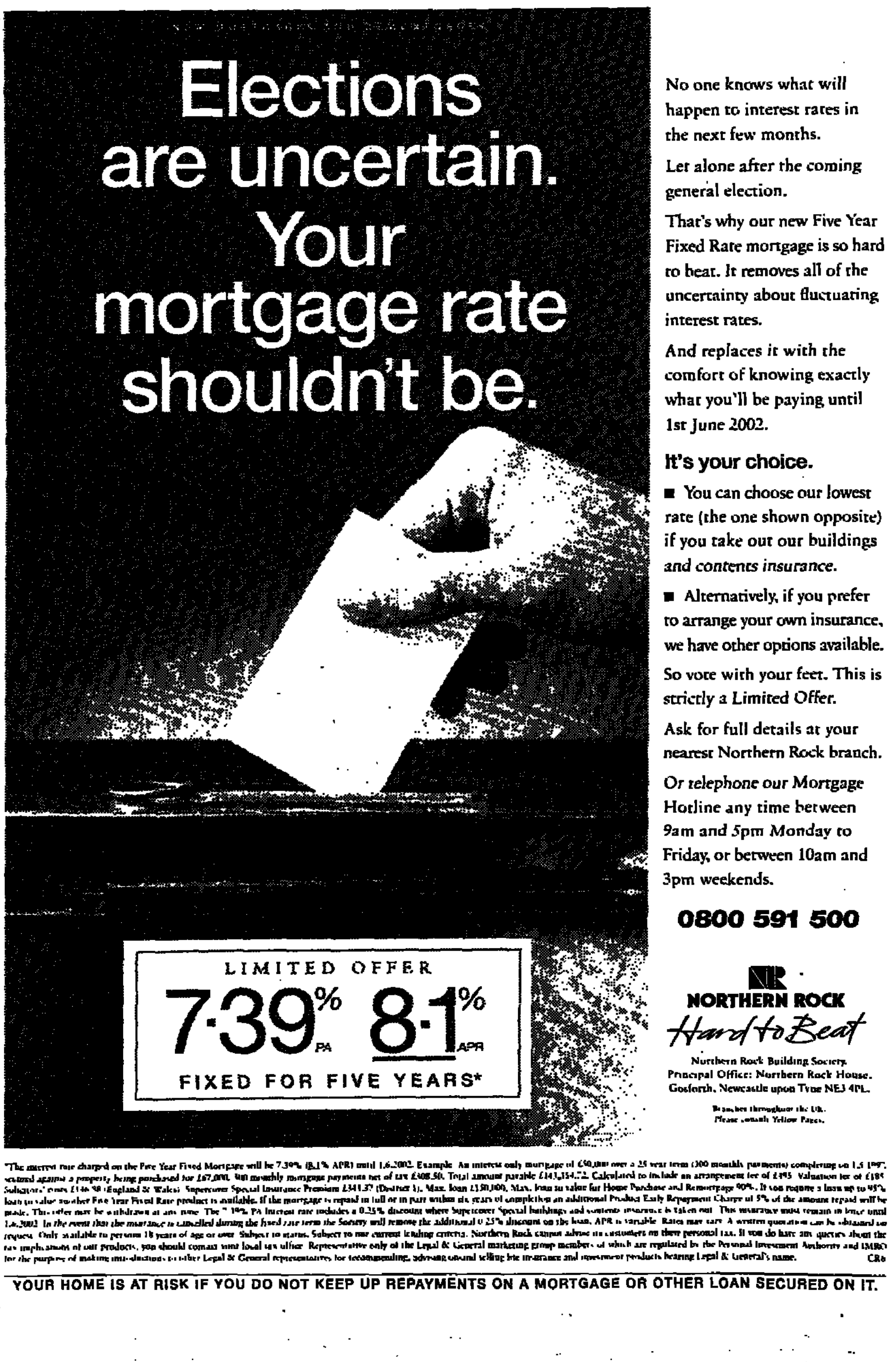

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Censorship fear as China adviser joins Hong Kong paper

FROM CATHERINE FIELD IN HONG KONG

STAFF on Hong Kong's flagship English-language daily say they are afraid that a censor is being employed who will vet any copy for unfavourable references towards China, which takes over the colony in 80 days.

Feng Xi Liang, 75, founder editor of the *China Daily*, a Communist Party mouthpiece, will take up a job as China consultant at the *South China Morning Post* next week, Jonathan Fenby, editor of the *Post*, announced.

Mr Feng's most recent job was consultant to *Windows* magazine, a Hong Kong publication which is considered so patriotically correct that it was distributed to passengers flying China's national airline.

"It is absolutely clear that he will be a quasi-political commissar," a senior *Post* reporter said. "What really worries me is reporters will start changing the slant or toning down a story just so they can be sure it gets into the paper." Another said: "This is just the start, it is very sinister."

Staff at the paper have not been told officially of Mr Feng's future role at the paper but have watched with concern as workmen have built him an office alongside that of the editor. Mr Fenby, a former editor of *The Observer* in London, declined to spell out what Mr Feng's role would be, citing commercial secrecy.

"Feng is a consultant to the newspaper and a consultant is a consultant. He is having an office next to mine because it is the only office space available. People can read anything they like into anything. But I am the editor."

Mr Feng's appointment comes amid concerns from Hong Kong's pro-democracy faction that the *Post* is shying away from extensive coverage of the territory's political issues and is beating a "patriotic" drum to sidestep any problems with China after the July 1 handover.

Last June, the *Post* appointed Sir Percy Cradock, a former British Ambassador to Beijing and a supporter of a depoliticised Hong Kong, to its editorial board. In October, the paper devoted its entire front page to a single photograph of activists planting Chinese and Taiwanese flags on one of the disputed Diaoyutai islands during protests against Japanese ownership of the islands. "Mission accomplished," declared the *Post* headline.

Emily Lau, a pro-democracy legislator and former journalist, said: "I am not surprised by Feng's appointment. They have the best of both worlds now, Sir Percy Cradock and Feng Xi Liang. This is very disturbing but not so unexpected. I think now I will just call it the *New China Post*." Fears of pro-Beijing bias at the *Post* emerged in 1993, when the paper was bought by Robert Kuok, a Malaysian-born Chinese.

Daisy Li, a journalist on the independent Chinese-language daily *Ming Pao*, said last night: "The problem of censorship does exist in Hong Kong and it is getting worse.

"The trouble is, it is more and more difficult to identify. What you need to do is look at a particular publication on a certain topic, compare it to earlier coverage, and you will notice the tone is softened."

North Korea 'remains threat'

Shalikashvili: "need to stay watchful"

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

NORTH KOREA'S military still poses a potent threat to the South despite reports of economic collapse and imminent famine, General John Shalikashvili, the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said yesterday.

"We need to stay ready and watchful," he told reporters in Tokyo, urging US military forces in the region to remain vigilant. A winter training exercise, which had just ended, had shown the North's economic woes had not diminished its war capability, he said. According to international aid agencies, North Korea is on the brink of famine and catastrophe. While America has promised to step up relief efforts, South Korea is reluctant to provide aid, fearing it could be diverted to North Korea's armed forces.

William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, ending a visit to Seoul, said he doubted whether the international community would offer large-scale food aid as long as the North's forces were maintained at a level that threatened the South.

Tears for last day of colony's naval base

FROM REUTER IN HONG KONG

TEARS flowed and eight bells tolled at a farewell for the Royal Navy in Hong Kong yesterday as Britain shut its *HMS Tamar* naval base in an end-of-empire retreat leading to the colony's return to China on July 1.

Admiral Sir Jock Slater, the First Sea Lord, Chris Patten, the Governor, and others spoke of dignity and pride as the White Ensign was lowered, furled and folded at the base on Stonecutters Island in Hong Kong harbour.

"The White Ensign has just been lowered over this shore base, but the values that it has stood for will, I hope, remain in this place: respect for law and for person, trust, duty and service," Mr Patten said. "But there is no cause for thinking sad thoughts, that there is dishonour in these endings. Nothing has melted away. There have been no defeats."

In a ceremony that drew tears from old-timers saddened by the decommissioning of Britain's last naval base east of Suez, more than 200 seamen in white uniforms marched through the gates to the upbeat rhythm of the Royal Marines' brass band.

HMS Tamar shut down 100 years to the day that a vessel of the same name first arrived in Hong Kong waters. Its closure ended a 156-year association between the Royal Navy and Hong Kong.

The first naval officer to set foot in Hong Kong was probably Sir Edward Belcher, who landed on January 25, 1841, and drank to Queen Victoria's health on Possession Mount. The Union flag was raised the following day.

China, whose navy will occupy another site on Stonecutters Island, was not represented at the ceremony.

☐ **Singapore:** Britain and Singapore signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at improving co-operation between their two navies. The pact will increase training exchanges, joint exercises and personnel visits. *(Reuter)*

ANDREW WONG / REUTER

The Royal Navy's White Ensign is folded for the final time at *HMS Tamar* in Hong Kong. Below, Chris Patten, the Governor, chats with men from the base

US attacks China over arms sales

Washington: America has accused China of violating arms proliferation pacts by selling components for chemical weapons to Iran and continuing to aid Pakistan's nuclear programme (Tom Rhodes writes).

Robert Einhorn, a senior State Department official, prompting immediate demands in Congress for tougher economic sanctions against Beijing, testified before the Senate that China had deliberately ignored protests from the Clinton Administration in its sales to "rogue" states. He said that Beijing was the leading supplier of conventional weapons to Iran.

Angola hope

Johannesburg: After more than two years' fragile peace and several postponements, Angola's ruling left-wing MPLA and Unita rebel movement came together at a glittering ceremony in Luanda, the capital, to form a power-sharing government that many hope will close the book on Africa's longest civil war (Inigo Gilmore writes).

But the non-attendance of Jonas Savimbi, 62, the Unita leader, highlighted lingering mistrust between the sides.

Zaire warning

Johannesburg: Laurent Kabila, the Zairean rebel leader, urged foreigners to leave Kinshasa, the capital before a planned assault by his forces (Inigo Gilmore writes). Speaking on rebel radio, he again called on President Mobutu to step down. "If he does not use this last chance, the fighting will go on and will only end in the capture of Kinshasa."

Spin doctrine

Lagos: The winners of local elections in several wards in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, were decided by the toss of a coin under rules drawn up by the military regime, poll officials admitted. *(AFP)*

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Four commanders purged in Yeltsin bribes crackdown

From Richard Beeston in Moscow

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday made good on his pledge to crack down on corruption in Russia, when he dismissed four of the country's top military officers, accused of abusing their ranks.

The Kremlin confirmed that the Russian leader had signed a decree sacking General Vladimir Semyonov, the commander of land forces, General Anton Terentyev, his deputy in charge of training, Admiral Igor Khmelnov, the Navy's Chief of Staff, and Vice-Admiral Vyacheslav Kharnikov, the commander of the Northern Fleet.

All four men have been accused of corruption and are under investigation by the chief military prosecutor's office, which said last month that it was looking into allegations involving 100 senior officers, including 20 generals.

General Semyonov, a former Soviet Deputy Defence Minister, had been expecting his dismissal for months. In December, Igor Rodionov, the Defence Minister, accused him publicly of corrupt practices. It was alleged that his wife was involved in suspect arms deals and that he had illegally bought his Defence Ministry *dacha*, as well as a mansion on land belonging to a military hospital, for a fraction of the market price.

Admiral Khmelnov, the second ranking officer in the Navy, has been under investigation for allegedly receiving millions of dollars for the sale of 64 decommissioned warships. The proceeds were supposed to be spent on the construction of new housing for naval officers serving in the Pacific Fleet, where some apartments were built for the admiral's family and friends.

Yesterday's sackings may be the start of a broader purge of the officer corps by the Kremlin, which plans to reduce sharply the top-heavy military as part of its planned reforms. They also serve to reinforce Mr Yeltsin's pledge made on Thursday that he is serious about cracking down on rampant official corruption, which is endemic in the demoralised armed forces.

With wages often delayed for months, servicemen of all ranks have been involved in the illicit sale of military equipment and property in an effort to survive. While acknowledging that the public has "its doubts" about the Kremlin's attempts to root out age-old corrupt practices in Russia, President Yeltsin nevertheless pledged that he would make the battle against graft a cornerstone of his final three years in office.

"I am determined, I have the political will and I have your backing in this fight. I will bring this difficult struggle to an end. It will become scary to steal and to take bribes," he said in a radio address broadcast to the nation. "Corruption is one of the main reasons that the authority of the Russian state is low today," he said.

The battle against corruption is likely to be waged by Boris Nemtsov, the newly appointed First Deputy Prime Minister, who is due to chair a meeting today on how to stamp out corrupt habits.

The young former governor has devised a plan to open up government contracts to public tender in an effort to prevent the common practice of officials being paid bribes to award contracts to friendly firms.

Semyonov: rumours of suspect arms deals

☐ **Grozny:** An aide to Salman Raduyev, the Chechen rebel commander, said his boss, one of Russia's most wanted men, had been critically injured in an assassination attempt. Sultan Miyev, Mr Raduyev's military consultant, said Mr Raduyev's car had been blown up early on Wednesday on a road outside the capital, Grozny. He went on to threaten "a revenge blow in Russia" on April 21 or 22. *(Reuter)*

US judge rebuked for attack on Britain

From James Bone in New York

AN Irish-American judge who launched into an anti-British diatribe while sentencing a British woman for killing her baby in New York has been reprimanded.

Judge Robert Hanophy lashed out at the British legal system last year while sentencing Carolyn Beale for suffocating her newborn daughter and trying to smuggle the body back home.

The judge attacked Britain's Infanticide Act, which urges leniency for women suffering from post-partum depression, and derided British courts for wrongly convicting the Guildford Four for IRA bombings.

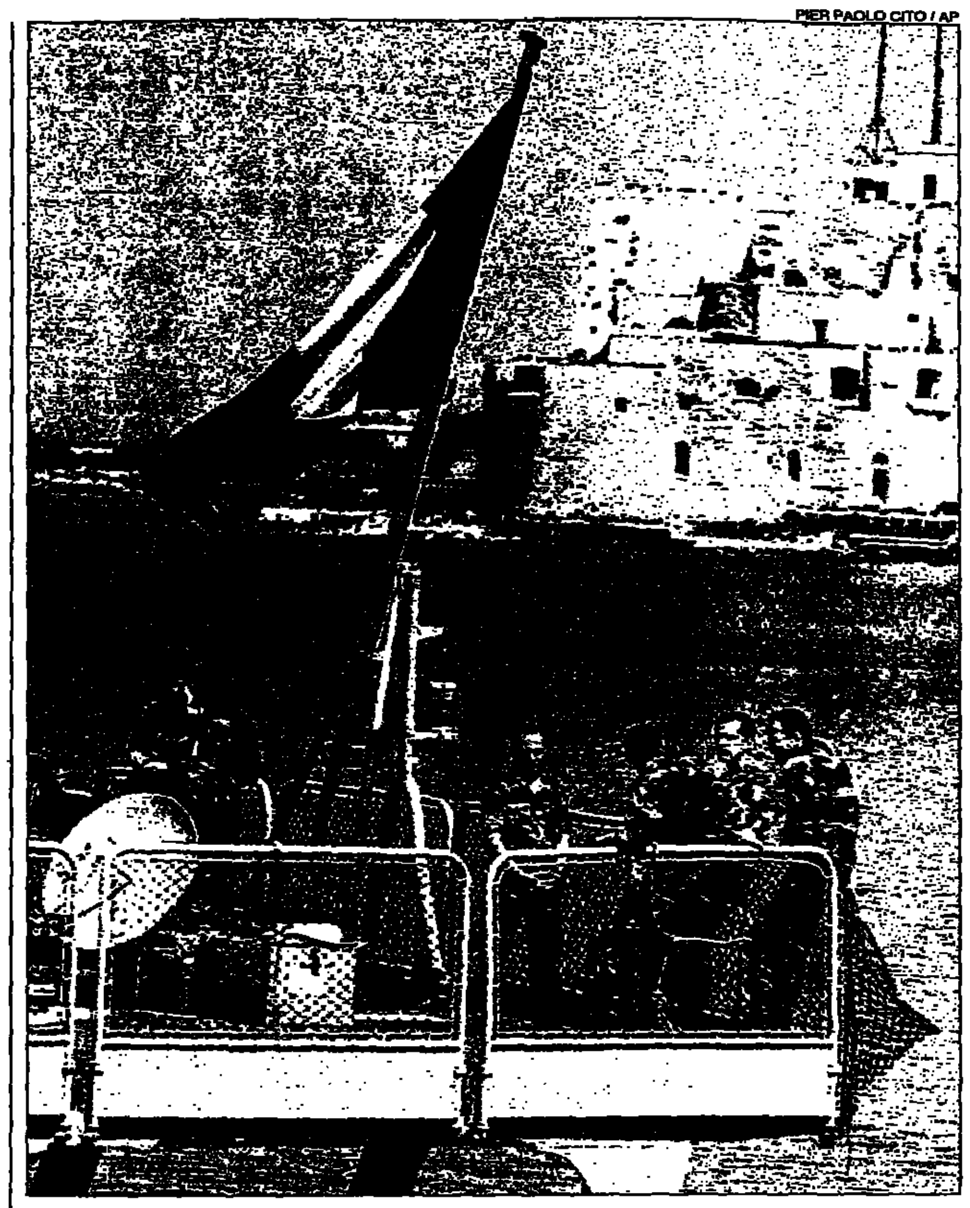
New York State's Commission on Judicial Conduct ruled that Judge Hanophy's remarks, particularly his reference to Northern Ireland, was "mean-spirited and political in nature". He had "failed to act like an impartial judge".

Judge Hanophy was upset when Beale's father, Peter, had called the American criminal justice system "barbaric and uncivilised" for keeping his daughter waiting 18 months for her case to be settled, including time at a remand centre.

Beale tried to go to New York to testify on Judge Hanophy's behalf. Michael Dowd, her lawyer, said she considered that the judge had treated her fairly by sentencing her to time served plus five years' probation and letting her return to Britain.

A censure by the commission does not bar a judge from sitting on the bench.

PIER PAOLO CITO / AP



***French soldiers relax on the Champlain* in Brindisi harbour before she set sail with 400 troops for Albania yesterday, as part of the Italian-led multinational intervention force meant to secure humanitarian shipments in the strife-torn country (Richard Owen writes). Advance Italian troops arrived at Durres and at Tirana airport yesterday to secure the ports and provide a secure corridor.**

Aid force sails to Albania

In Rome, Koffi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, said that the 6,000-strong force — the bulk of which will begin arriving on Monday — had full UN backing as a "humanitarian mission". But the Italian press said that the force would inevitably find itself helping to "restore order". Sergio Romano, a former Italian envoy, said that Italy's true aim was "self-interest — stopping thousands of refugees".

America strikes EU deal on Cuba

From Tom Rhodes in Washington

AMERICA reached a deal to avert a trade war with Europe last night, settling a dispute over strident legislation punishing all foreign investment in Cuba.

The Commerce Department confirmed that an agreement had been struck between Washington and Brussels over the Helms-Burton legislation signed by President Clinton last March.

Sir Leon Brittan, the EU Trade Commissioner, said the accord would permit both sides to address the long-term implications of foreign investment in third countries. He said that Europe could suspend the World Trade Organisation panel considering the complaint, which was due to be filed on Monday.

The Clinton Administration had long hoped to improve relations with its European partners over the issue of business with President Castro's regime, and was thought to have offered a compromise to modify the terms of the legislation.

Stuart Eizenstat, the Under Secretary of Commerce, was to provide details of the agreement last night. These were thought to be similar to a plan which has been circulated on Capitol Hill.

That calls for the European Union to "establish disciplines to deter" private companies in Europe from investing in confiscated property, not merely in Cuba but throughout the world.

In exchange, Congress would be asked to ease certain provisions in the Helms-Burton legislation, including the exclusion from the US of foreign executives whose companies deal with Cuba.

European countries, including Britain, would be asked to adopt an across-the-board principle that corporations not be allowed to profit from investing in properties confiscated without compensation.

President Clinton has employed a regular six-month waiver to delay the most controversial element of the law, which allows any American whose property was confiscated after the 1959 Cuban revolution to sue foreign corporations using their assets.

Alert for snipers as Pope enters gun-filled 'arena of war' in Sarajevo

From Tom Walker in Sarajevo

ON THE broken rooftop the former Bosnian Muslim sniper peered down at the football ground where the Pope will celebrate Mass in front of 50,000 people tomorrow. "I just have to put the arrow on him. It's not so difficult," he said. "The only thing I would have to watch is the wind."

Sarajevo's Kosovo stadium is surrounded by hills and tower blocks, thousands of vantage points across federation and Serb territory affording a clear view of the pontiff's every step. It is a landscape that nurtured war for three-and-a-half years. Now it is the backdrop for the Pope's riskiest trip: the Catholic Church's head is visiting a gun-ridden city that is 80 per cent Muslim. From 14 floors up, the green grass of the pitch shimmered in sunlight. The stands, the VIP entrance and exit: everything was tantalisingly clear, just half a mile away. For the modern marksman with telescopic sights, easy pickings.

Yesterday the Bosnian police, Nato troops and the United Nations all said they were satisfied with security arrangements for the visit, which begins this afternoon. But no matter how many police, soldiers and equipment are thrown at Sarajevo, the city remains a sharpshooter's heaven. The sniper spoke chillingly of the pinpoint accuracy of weapons still regularly uncovered by Stabilisation Force troops. He pointed to the bombed-out skeletons of buildings, ideal for marksmen.

Major Tony White, a Stabilisation Force spokesman, talked down any *Day of the Jackal* scenarios. "I wouldn't go up on any roofs again," he said. "The police are warning people to stay away from windows and terraces." He added that about 10,000 Bosnian police would be involved in the operation, backed by "hundreds" of Stabilisation Force troops.

Alex Ivanko, a UN spokesman and Sarajevo veteran, said that the Bosnians had been advised by Danish, German and Italian VIP protection experts, and had a security net in place that "equalled standards anywhere else in Europe". On snipers, however, he would not be drawn.

☐ **Belgrade:** A gunman killed the feared commander of Serbian President Milosevic's security apparatus as he dined with his son in a Belgrade restaurant early yesterday. He was the highest-ranking figure to die in a "professonal" public shooting, a common event in the Serb capital. Victims are usually black market mafia members.

Media reports said that the police colonel-general and Deputy Interior Minister, Radovan Stojicic, 46 — known by the nickname of Badza [Big Guy] — died instantly.

He commanded riot police in the city during three months of opposition protests against the rigging of elections by President Milosevic. *(Reuter)*

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Spanish conservatives protest over political satire programme that leaves no holds barred

Puppet regime's power

MADRID FILE

by TUNKU VARADARAJAN

A TELEVISED rabble of rubber puppets, modelled on Britain's *Spitting Image*, has led to a major ruckus among Madrid's conservative politicians. Appearing weekly on Canal Plus, a private television channel, the irreverent puppets mock a range of Spanish politicians — from the austere Prime Minister, José María Aznar, to the voluble Felipe González, the Socialist opposition leader. No one is spared from their rough-hewn lampooning.

Yet members of the ruling conservative Popular Party (PP) believe that *Las noticias del guiñol* (The news from Punch and Judy) singles them out for special abuse. There is some truth in the accusation, as the channel's owner, Jesús de Polanco, who also owns the left-wing paper *El País*, is an unequivocal foe of the Aznar Government.

That humour should provide a battleground for Spain's conservatives and Señor de Polanco is ironic. He is a humourless man who was once privately described by a newspaper executive as a modern-day "cross between the Sphinx and Torquemada", the infamous Inquisitor-General.

Tired of being derided week after week, conservatives now want revenge. Leading members of the party, who have received backing from the right-wing *ABC* daily newspaper, have called for their own programme of rubber puppets — a "*contraguiñol*", or a sort of *Spitting Back*.

In an editorial last week, *ABC* attacked the programme as "a laboratory for Socialist agit-prop ... at the exclusive service of Felipe González". All politicians on the Right, the newspaper continued, were depicted invariably as "buffoons and illiterates". Conservative politicians were within their rights to call for a "televisual corrective".

Ángel Acebes, the PP secretary-general, confessed to being worried by the broadcasts. "The worst aspect is that the programme is made for purposes other than humour.

"I don't mind if programmes are made for the amusement of the public, but when they are straightforward vehicles of a certain political opinion, they should announce themselves clearly as such."

The controversy has provided welcome publicity for Canal Plus, as viewing figures leapt by several thousand after *ABC*'s assault. Aware that an attack on rubber puppets could prove politically counter-productive, senior ministers have scurried to the press to deny that they found *Las noticias del guiñol* offensive.

Rodrigo Rato, the Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for the economy, said he thought the programme perfectly amusing. A source within the ruling party, however, revealed that Señor Rato's is a minority view.

"We detest those nasty little dolls," he said, "and that nasty little man Polanco."

EL PAÍS

José María Aznar, left, arm-wrestles with Felipe González on the controversial puppet show

Soaking up the adulation

THE flamenco dancer, Joaquín Cortés, as famous for stripping to the waist in his performances as he is for his romance with supermodel Naomi Campbell, made a startling revelation in an interview recently. Señor Cortés told El País *newspaper: "I am not a dancer. I am an artist. I am a musician, choreographer, director, actor and model. I am a sponge." Yet his comments, far from generating bafflement, seem to have enhanced his popularity. In a recent poll among Spanish housewives, he was voted, by an overwhelming majority, the "most exciting man in Spain".*

Fighting talk makes dons speechless

UNITED by a clear aversion to English as the world's lingua franca, hundreds of writers, politicians and publishers from the Hispanic world held a conference in Mexico this week aimed at turning Spanish into a truly global language.

Yet the learned cohorts, debating in the colonial city of Zacatecas, have piqued the Spanish Royal Academy in Madrid, which regards itself as the sole bastion of the Spanish language.

The organisers of the conference — the Mexican Foreign Ministry and the *Instituto Cervantes*, Spain's version of the British Council — neglected, astonishingly, to invite representatives of the academy.

Carlos Bousoño, the writer and academician, fumed: "It is highly improper that the Royal Academy should not be invited to a debate on the future of the Spanish language." Its presence would have lent weight to the conference, many believe, as it has set itself the daunting task of finding ways to protect Spanish from the "Anglo-Saxon onslaught", as a local paper put it.

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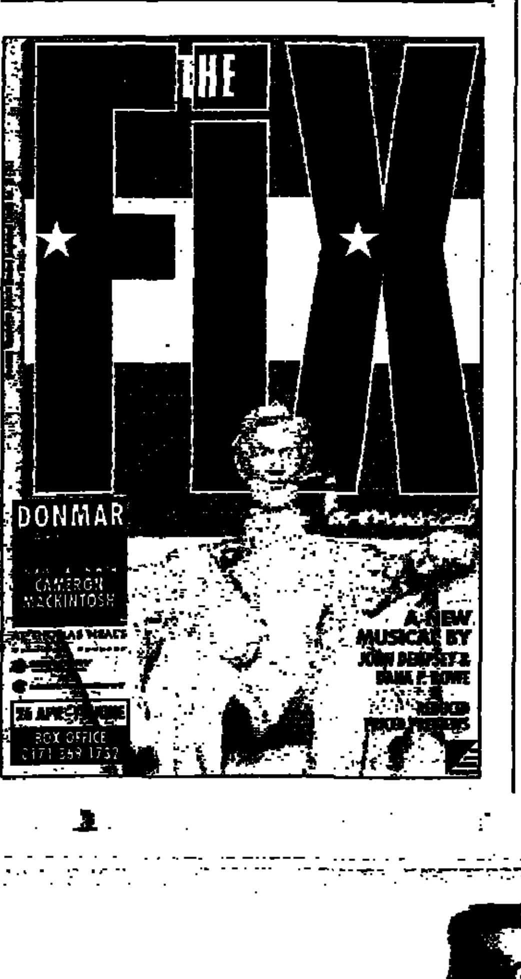


Assisi frescoes 'not by Giotto'

By Richard Owen

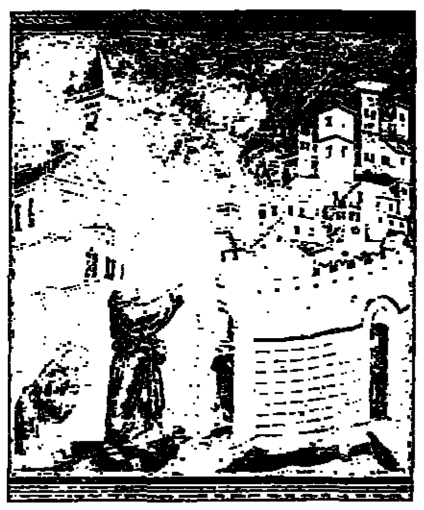
THE peace of the Umbrian hilltop town of Assisi has been shattered by claims by two respected authorities on Italian art that 13th-century frescoes in the town's great Basilica are not by Giotto, as long believed, but his neglected older mentor, Pietro Cavallini.

The theory threatens to stand art history on its head, since Giotto is traditionally credited as the artist who led Western art away from the flat, stylised depictions of Byzantine art and towards the naturalism and perspective of modern Western painting. Dante depicts Giotto in the *Divine Comedy* as the man who created the starting point for all Western art by giving it life and movement.

In the massive Upper Basilica of Assisi, brown-habited Franciscan friars use electric torches to highlight details of the great series of frescoes on the lower walls, painted between 1290 and 1295. But according to Professor Federico Zeri, a leading art historian, and Bruno Zanardi, an art restorer who has spent ten years cleaning the cycle, only seven of the 28 frescoes can be said "with any certainty" to be by Giotto di Bondone (1266-1337).

Most of the others, the two experts have concluded, are by Cavallini (active 1273-1321), who was fêted in his time as a painter and mosaicist of genius, but whose reputation has been overshadowed by that of his pupil. Professor Zeri's investigations in Assisi with Signor Zanardi are being published as *Il Cantiere di Giotto* (Giotto's Workshop). They have identified three painters who worked on the St Francis series. "We don't know who the first one was," Signor Zanardi said. "The second was Cavallini, and the third Giotto." Those paintings assigned to Giotto by the two experts include "probably" the first — *St Francis as a Youth in the Assisi Market Place* — and "definitely" the last six, including *St Francis Parting from St Clare, The Canonisation of St Francis, St Francis Cures a Wounded Man in Spain* and *St Francis Frees a Repentant Heretic*. The most famous "Giotto" frescoes — *St Francis Preaching to the Birds and St Francis Casting out Devils from Arezzo* — are credited to Cavallini.

Cavallini is usually considered one of many influences on Giotto, together with Cimabue and Duccio. But Signor Zanardi said he had spotted "unmistakable resemblances" between the Assisi frescoes and surviving works by Cavallini in *Santa Maria di Trastevere* (on the life of Mary) and *Santa Cecilia di Trastevere* (Christ, the Apostles and the Last Judgment), both in Rome. Signor Zanardi said that the discovery "in no way detracts from Giotto's greatness ... but we shall have to reassess Cavallini's contribution to the development of art". Confusion had arisen partly because of the mistaken assertion by Giorgio Vasari, the Renaissance artist and biographer, that Cavallini was the pupil and follower of Giotto, when in fact the reverse was true.



St Francis Casting out Devils in Arezzo, credited to Cavallini

THE SUNDAY TIMES
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Next Tuesday is your chance to tell John Major what you think about his government. You can also ask him what he would do with five more years in power. This is a unique opportunity for readers of The Times and The Sunday Times to have a say in the general election campaign with the most powerful man in the country

The Prime Minister will speak for about 20 minutes before answering questions from the audience. The event, to be held in central London on Tuesday, April 15, will take place between 8pm amd 9.30pm.

Tickets, which must be booked in advance, are £10 each (£7.50 for students, pensioners and unemployed). Telephone First Call on 0171-420 0000. Lines are open 24 hours.

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هكذا من الأعلى

■ OPINION

If Truffaut could cross the great divide between scribes and directors, why *not* our critics?

■ BUILDINGS

New neighbours for St Paul's: the City of London will soon look rather different

THE TIMES ARTS

■ POP

He's back and he's in form: the indestructible Bryan Adams shows his class at Wembley Arena

■ ON MONDAY

Is Covent Garden selling *the* public short? Rodney Milnes scrutinises a makeshift season

Will this production run and ruin?

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

It won't be half as much fun as the revenge tragedies of the Jacobean era, of course, which invariably *end with* some crazed Medici nymphomaniac poisoner staggering across the stage, knee-deep in gouged eyes and disembowelled torsos, and plunging a blade into her incestuous half-brother with a fruity curse. *Nevertheless*, the revenge drama currently being enacted at the Battersea Arts *Centre* will *surely* make up in verbal barbs what it lacks in corpses.

Four intrepid theatre critics have crossed the footlights, and the alleged Great Divide, by agreeing to direct plays. They include two *scribes* whose exquisitely honed prose graces these pages — the *seasoned Jeremy Kingston and the* vibrant young James Christopher — as well as *The Guardian*'s Michael Billington and the London *Evening Standard*'s Nicholas de Jongh.

In the audience last night were some of the theatre directors whose productions the critics have so wittily belittled in the past. And, in the spirit of the enterprise, several directors are *turning into* critics for a night. Which is perhaps just as well, since some of the *other* critics (ie, the ones who aren't directing shows) have refused to review the ones that are, on the grounds that they don't *write about amateur theatre. I say*, girls, calm down. Anyway, Sir Peter Hall's review of Mr Kingston's efforts will be in *The Times* on Monday. (No more than 600 words please, Hall, and do try to keep the paragraphs short.)

All this came about because of Michael Bogdanov, a director whose *nickname* among theatre critics — "Bodger" — goes some way to explaining *why he* hates them with more vigour than anybody else on the British stage. Except, perhaps the terrifying Steven Berkoff, who always seems to be on the point of emulating Vincent Price in *Theatre of Blood and embarking on a bout of* hackicide. Or Jonathan Miller, whose monthly threats never to direct opera in Britain again are invariably accompanied by a tirade against critics who fail to understand his point. (The first time *I* ever talked to Miller his greeting remark was: *"The Times's review of my Tosca* production this morning was disgracefully *impertinent* — and I use the word in the 17th-century sense.")

Then there's the pushy teenage violinist Vanessa-Mae, who recently took an advertisement to *cast aspersions on a critic's qualifications*. And Stephen Fry, who *burst into tears and left the* country after being panned. Actually, now I think about it, almost *everybody* in the arts hates critics.

Anyway, last year Bogdanov wrote a *New Statesman* article *claiming that critics don't have the* foggiest notion about what goes on behind the scenes. That taunt has been around as long as show business itself, and it's quite understandable. After all, if you have spent months of your life, and *large wads of other* people's money, mounting a spectacular show which is then chewed up in print by a bunch of (in your view) myopic, malicious and mentally deranged hacks, you can easily believe yourself to be the victim of *impertinence* — in the 17th-century sense, of course.

But is it true that critics as a breed have virtually no experience of what they huff and puff about? And if it is, does it matter? The answer to the first question is that there have been many practitioner-critics in history, and there are a good *number today. Berlioz and* Schumann wrote about music with as *much* passion as they wrote the actual minims and quavers. The history of cinema is stuffed with critics-turned-directors, especially in France: think of Truffaut, Chabrol, Godard, Tavernier. The *nouvelle vague* was being vague in print long before it was being *nouvelle* on screen.

Obvious painter-critics are Ruskin and Fry, but three present-day British critics — William Packer, William Feaver and Giles Auty — recently mounted a joint exhibition. As for the theatre, Shaw was also a magnificent critic and so *was Tynan before he got interested* in sex (never a good idea for critics) and devised *Oh, Calcutta!*.

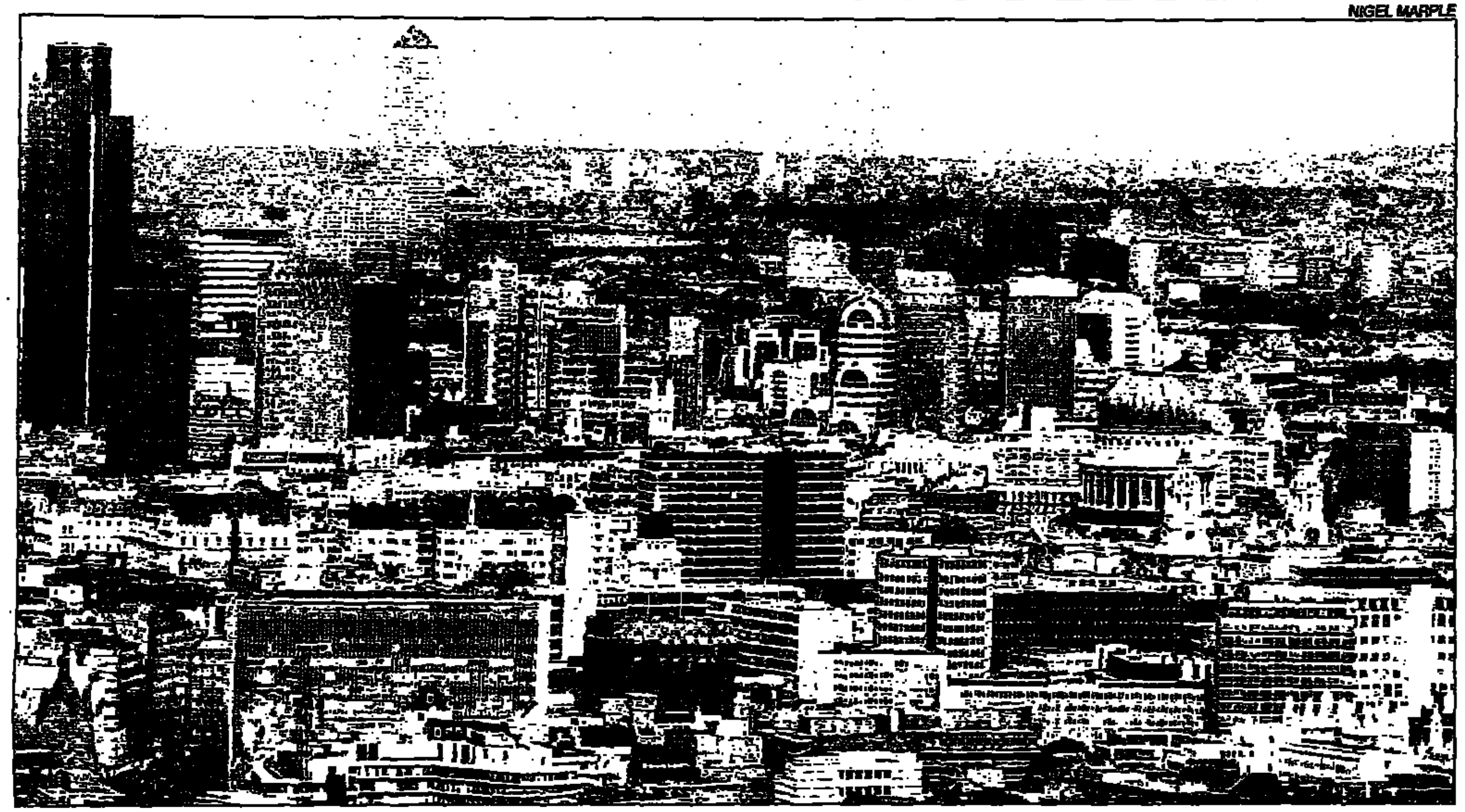
Clearly, if you know your artform from the inside you have certain advantages as a critic. You can scatter lots of coded secrets into your text. But there are *dangers. You can get too* friendly with people whom you may have to review unfavourably. True, the female music critic who declared that she always found it useful to "discuss a conductor's interpretation in the bath with him *afterwards*" is *fondly* remembered. She was exceptional — in every sense, I'm sure. A more common problem is what happens in the literary world: Camden Town buddies reviewing each other's books.

No *single philosophy holds true* for all newspaper critics. Some take the narrow consumerist line that their only real obligation is to tell their readers whether a show is worth the ticket-price. Others feel a duty to guide performers, play*wrights or composers to perfection* of their craft. Others have a missionary zeal about promoting a particular school.

And there are some working in British newspapers today who nearly always get everything wrong, but are such good fun to read that no sane editor would *ever sack them. You see, critics are* in the entertainment business too. And they don't need to start directing plays to prove it. But dahlings — break a leg!

ARCHITECTURE: **Marcus Binney** on how the Square Mile learnt to stay open after hours

NIGEL MARPLE



London's business and banking centre, seen here from the British Telecom tower, has been a no-go area for seekers of nightlife — until now

Leases on life for the City

The City of London is changing for the better. And, like all the best changes in London, it is not planned, but organic.

For years, the single-minded policy of the City *fathers* was *offices, offices and more offices*. All other uses were steadily driven out — small businesses, shops, and not a resident outside the Barbican.

Now, by the greatest of ironies, just as the anti-terrorist Ring of Steel has been extended, the invisible wall is coming down. One of the first to see, and seize, the opportunity has been Sir Terence Conran, who has bought the *rundown Great Eastern Hotel* at Liverpool Street station with Malmaison, the group that has brought stylish hotels to inner-city Glasgow and Edinburgh's once famously rough port of Leith.

"People say to me the City is dead after eight o'clock in the evenings and at weekends," Conran says. "I reply of course — nothing's open and there's nothing to do." Conran has permission to restore the ornate Abercorn Rooms with an oyster bar, chop house and brasseries, and to sort out the warren of accommodation upstairs by introducing a large, circular atrium with bedrooms opening off the balconies. It is a two-year task, but *later this summer Conran will* test the water by taking the *roof restaurant on Lord* Palumbo's No 1 Poultry.

On the hotel front, Conran is likely to be beaten by the Franklin group, owners of Duke's Hotel in St James's, which hopes shortly to obtain permission to convert the former City Bank at 5, *Threadneedle Street into* a super-comfortable 65-bed*room* hotel. The director, David Naylor-Leyland, says: "In the West End we have guests who get in at one in the morning *and leave* again at *six*. They're over here to do deals in the City. We'll give them large bedrooms on the spot, with all the telephones and computer *back-up they* need."

Naylor-Leyland argues that the fall in office values has forced owners to look at other uses. Recently Thorestone Investments bought the sumptuous Edwardian Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank (more recently Barclays) in Gracechurch Street with a view to converting it into another hotel. Anthony Thorpe, a director, says: "We've been talking to an American group which specialises in business hotels. *The banking hall, with its* ornate domes and Chinese *figurines*, has been pre-let to a restaurant."

Thorpe has just obtained permission to convert a handsome Edwardian office at 15, Trinity Square, into 20 apartments looking out over the *Tower* of London and *the* Thames.

NatWest now has its own development team at work in the City. The slick exterior of Seifert's NatWest Tower has been restored as it was before the IRA bomb explosion in 1993, and an eye-catching entrance hall is being added at *the bottom* hall.

NatWest's banking hall in Threadneedle Street has just re-opened as an art gallery, and Sir Michael Hopkins has been called in to provide an imaginative solution for the bank's huge slice of empty historic property along Old *Broad Street. This spring it* will unveil the newly restored banking hall by Sir Edwin Cooper at 1, Prince's Street.

For years, London's tourists were bussed to St Paul's and the Tower, but never encour*aged to explore the City*. Now the Bank of England has a museum overflowing with Japanese tourists. Not long ago, the infamous Templeman report suggested closure or disposal of 27 of the City's churches. *Now the threat* has vanished and the new bishop *has taken up residence* in the old Deanery, near St Paul's. St Helen's Bishopsgate and St Andrew Undershaft have been restored after bomb damage, as has the fire-damaged St Mary at Hill, although more money is needed to put back the superb Wren woodwork. *The* best surprise of all is the rich interior of Bevis Marks Synagogue of 1701, whose restoration was completed last year.

The City's famous Victorian markets are there to visit — Leadenhall, freshly painted and still selling meat and poultry and Smithfield, halfway through a £20 million programme of works *to meet* EC regulations. Spitalfields, condemned to demolition, now has tennis courts, playgrounds and London's first new opera house in a century, while Billingsgate fish market — saved, restored and then left empty for a decade — now has *people busy at work in yet* another branch of NatWest.

Liverpool Street station, *its spectacular* Victorian ironwork reconfigured to a new track layout, is worth a visit for the sushi bar alone, where dishes come *circling round* on a midget conveyor.

The City's numerous handsome pubs serve far better food than those in the West End. Marks & Spencer now has two stores in the Square Mile. A smart new Pizza Express, sizzling with blue *neon, is suspended over the* crossroads at London Wall.

There are plans afoot to turn the magnificent courtyard of the Royal Exchange, opposite the Bank of England, into yet another large brasserie, although *Guardian Royal* Exchange, which occupies the *offices* above, is *reportedly* hostile to the idea. But with Marco Pierre White being talked of as the chef, the pressure is on.

Working, class, hero

POP

THE defining moment on the first of Bryan Adams's five nights in the sterile venue of Wembley Arena came 40 minutes into a two-and-a-half-hour set, *Nigel Williamson writes*. As he sang *(Everything I Do) I Do It For You*, the syrupy ballad that sat at No 1 for 16 weeks in 1991, I noticed that at least half the audience was singing along, eyes closed.

It was a triumphant display of the transforming power of rock'n'roll: in some temporary but powerful suspension of disbelief, people had convinced themselves that, for a moment, Adams really was doing it just for them. In the face of such rapport, the critic feels almost an irrelevance.

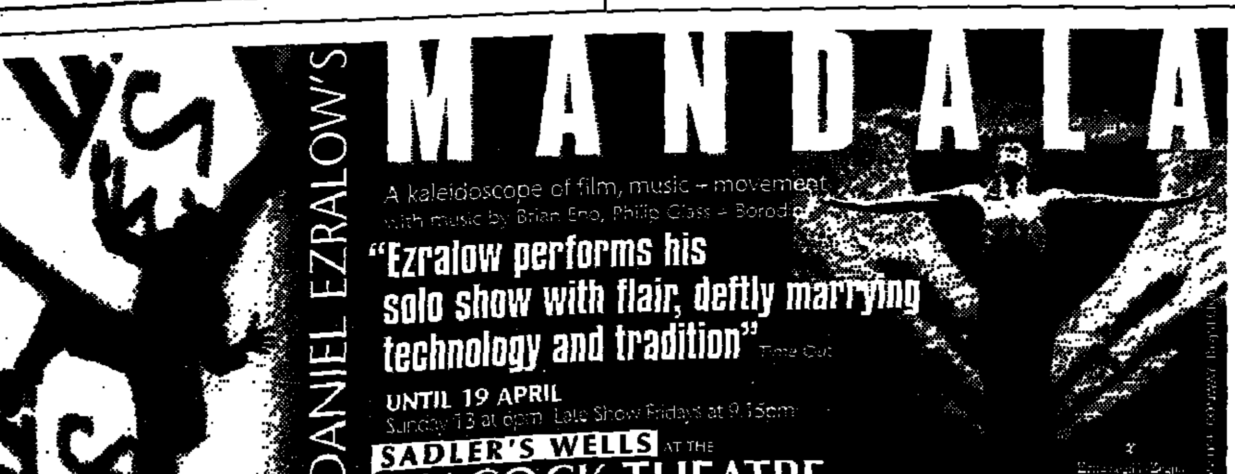
Adams's detractors say that his ballads have a paint-by-numbers approach and the up-tempo songs sound as if they have rolled off a production line. But few performers fill in the blanks or press all the right buttons quite so meticulously. You know that your musical emotions are being manipulated, but *Adams does it* in *such* an engaging way that you don't mind.

He first appeared on a mini-stage in the middle of the auditorium for two solo numbers, before taking the main stage with a five-piece band for *The Only Thing that Looks Good on Me is You*, while eight models paraded on a catwalk in front of him. Adams went on to perform nearly 30 songs of varying style and quality, from the great *Run to You* (even if the guitar riff is borrowed from Blue Oyster Cult) to the dire *18 'Til I Die* which, at more than double the age, he somehow managed to sing without even a hint of irony.

The prickly sensitivity of his voice means that, like Rod Stewart, Adams can switch easily from tear-jerkers such as *Straight from the Heart* to raucous rockers like *Hey Elvis*. Back on the mini-stage in the middle of the crowd, he and the band essayed a punk version of Eddie Cochran's *C'mon Everybody* before ending with *Let's Make a Night to Remember* and Adams's anthem, the stomping *Summer of '69* (the year in which the clocks appear to have stopped in this Peter Pan world of mythical rock'n'roll youth).

Adams does not set trends and no one would call him an innovator. It's just that he rocks harder than almost all of the competition.

The Flexible Mortgage
See Page 38



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Alan Coren

■ What has the Profumo Affair to do with my bathroom?

I have just been squatting on the Cliveden bidet. Not, sadly, the bidet *of* Cliveden, for I should have been tickled no end — as it were — to have settled my buttocks where the great and good once settled theirs: to have savoured just the merest snatch of how it must have felt, in 1963, to be Christine Keeler, staring at the golden taps and wondering what a nice girl like her was doing in a joint like this. Waiting, perhaps, for the War Minister, John Profumo, to bang on the door and inquire whether she was going to be all bloody day in there. But this bidet of mine wasn't in Cliveden, it was in Islington. It was only called the Cliveden. It wasn't even connected, let alone well. And I had my trousers on.

I had them on when I sat on the Sandringham, too. Do not begin to think about what I began to think about when I sat on the Sandringham. Though, mind you, it wasn't half as unnerving as what I thought about when I sat on the Cottage. That is another bathroom suite in the Armitage Shanks range. So is the Tiffany. And the Lichfield. And the Claudette. There they all were in the Islington showroom, in serried rank, set up and twinkled to their best by loving hands eager for them to appeal to the potential owners who strolled, and stared, and touched, and murmured, and pondered. It was a little like Battersea Dogs Home, except for the imploring eyes. That and the fact that if you are looking for a new dog, you do not try sitting on it.

The assistant was not entirely happy about the sitting. In truth, I was not that happy myself, because I was wearing my brown trilby: readers who may occasionally have spotted my front-page mugshot in this hat will perhaps appreciate my unease better than those who haven't, but even these latter may be able to empathise. One does not cut much of a dash sitting on a bidet in a brown trilby. And, since you suggest, one cuts even less of a dash by taking it off and sitting on a bidet with a brown trilby on one's knee. I cannot explain why this is so. You had to be there.

I did, anyway. I had to be there because we are having a new bathroom built, and there is no point ordering new bathroom furniture without trying it out, checking its comfort, all that, so while my wife lay in a number of baths, I sat on the other stuff. That is why the assistant was not entirely happy, because what his elegant showroom had been set up to show was his goods at their very best, looking just as they did in the smart glossy brochure, and in that brochure Armitage Shanks, though it had chosen to include a slim girl in a small towel coming out of the shower, had not chosen to include a plump man in a big hat sitting on the bidet. You could tell how unentirely happy the assistant was by looking at him while he was looking at the other potential customers looking at me, and, as the result, probably becoming less potential by the second.

To say nothing of the fact that, whenever I sat on something new, we had to talk about it. We had to talk about what, both male and female, had to get washed, and whether what I was sitting on was up to these tasks irrespective of gender — the Claudette, for example, and despite its name, has, for a man, a very useful indentation of the rim which is absent from, surprisingly, the Cottage; but then again, the Cottage incorporates a soap recess, which the Claudette ignores — and the assistant, though excellent in every other way, was not quite up to discussing with a man sitting below him in a brown trilby how best, for example, to get his works over the rim of the Cottage in order to take advantage of the soap dish absent from the works-friendly Claudette.

Though none of this — it was, after all, man-to-man — was quite as tricky for him to handle as the questions I was required to ask on Mrs Coren's behalf, regarding spray-spread, jet power and so on, not least because Mrs Coren's head kept suddenly reappearing around us as she sat up in different baths, and the assistant was clearly unsettled by the risk of her overhearing something which concerned her intimately.

It didn't bother me, that. It served her right for insisting on testing only the baths because, she said, it would be embarrassing for her to do the bidets. I fail to see why. She doesn't even own a hat.

The British love Italian cuisine, but in Italy they now prefer to diet or eat fast food, says **Philip Delves Broughton**

Forget Chiantishire: try Britain for la dolce vita

Ever since Caesar crossed the Channel, his head smeared in oil, his nose turned up at the woad-scrubbed natives, the English have envied the Italian way of life. Rome could be falling, Vesuvius exploding, the Allies invading, but the Italians always seemed to find time for lunch. As the early Britons grubbed and foraged, the Romans sat in their encampments gorging on aurochs dripping and heavily-seasoned fowl.

To this day, Chiantishire entices the English with the promise of a world where the fatness of an olive is more important than the next job promotion, the rotundity of a wine of greater moment than the minutiae of a mega-deal.

In Italian cities, it seemed that even the most hyperactive businessman still had time to sit down with his family for multi-course meals in the middle of the day. Not any longer. According to a report from the Italian National Institute of Nutrition, Italians are not only eating less, they are eating less well. At the same time, Britain, having learnt so much from the Italians, is ready and willing to take on the mantle as the epicurean's paradise.

In 1996, the Italian food industry registered a fall in production for the first time in more than a decade. While sales of pasta have held up, less meat, wine, vegetables and dairy products are being sold. Most Italians can still make spaghetti but panic at anything more complicated, preferring to buy ready-made and frozen dishes instead. Rather than sitting down for a proper lunch, they prefer to peck at low-fat, vitamin-enriched fast foods.

In pop cultural terms, the damage was done when Sophia Loren revealed that she kept her looks by eating sparingly and working out regularly, puncturing the myth of the pasta-eating Neapolitan fertility goddess.

Luciano Pavarotti did not help the Italian male by going on a diet of lemons and not much else. He stopped being a sensual, pleasure-loving artist and became instead a shame-faced fat man.

Others argue that Italians are not eating properly because they are catching up with modern social trends. The traditional *mamma*, trailing behind mothers in northern Europe, is now increasingly working as well as looking after children, so has less time for the loving preparation of tiramisù. Britain passed through its snack phase, like the recession, earlier than most and has emerged with a more sophisticated fast-food culture. Italy may soon catch up.

But there is another more sinister factor. Italians have turned away from square meals to snacks at the same time that they have been leap-frogging Britain in terms of GDP. The British contest some of the figures, but in Italy they are confident and proud that the Nineties have seen them trumping Britain in economic terms for the first time since the days of Imperial Rome.

The sorts of people who measure national prosperity simply by GDP are also the sorts who neglect to eat properly. Their ascendancy has meant that the Italians have microwaved their quality of life for a higher position up an economic league table.

"It's chaos, above all mental chaos," Michele Carruba, a leading Italian nutritionist, told *La Stampa*. "We are losing a very healthy alimentary tradition based on carbohydrates, protein and a variety of vegetables — the old tradition of 'a food for every day', gnocchi on Thursday, fish on Friday and so on." Neuroses, he adds, are spreading as a result.

The food mood in Britain is quite the reverse. For many years, the British sat at the feet of the impossibly haughty French chefs and their alchemy which created such incredible sauces, roux and pastry. It took Italy to alert us to the fact that our French fixation had yielded little more than the *crêpe suzette*, a showy, sugary, banal concoction, as redolent of the 1970s as Ford Capris.

From pizzas and pasta at one end to Elizabeth David and the *River Café Cook Book* at the other, Italy was the most important influence in teaching Britain about the importance of quality over quantity of ingredients, elegant simplicity in presentation over pointless elaboration.

Italian food freed us from Gallic hegemony with the lesson that in food as in modernist architecture, form followed function. Use decent ingredients and they will look and taste right with minimal adornment. The trickery of French cooking was a con trick. Pasta, pesto, parma ham and parmesan were simple, unembarrassable foods. Restaurants soon had to keep up with their increasingly demanding customers.

Since 1990, Italian food exports to this country have gone up by more than 40 per cent. Britain is among the biggest wine-drinking countries in Europe. London is said to possess some of the finest Italian restaurants in the world, Italy included. Italians, whether businessmen, footballers or diplomats, say it is easier these days to live *la dolce vita* in London than in Rome or Milan.

To learn that real Italians are now rushing home to eat pre-packaged, flavour-enhanced *lasagne al forno* is like finding out that a model schoolmistress has taken to eating with her fingers and telling filthy jokes.

If, in a week in which temperatures in London have exceeded those in Rome, the epicurean poet Horace were to recline at his ethereal Sabine farm, sip the Falernian and look down for his heirs, he would have trouble finding them. For they would not be there among the Barbour-clad rat-racers of Venice or Turin but farther north, among the easy, contented full-bellied people of Britain. "*Nunc est bibendum*," he would say, between mouthfuls of honey-roasted dormice. "Not bad for a bunch of barbarians."

I prefer my morality to be private, Your Grace

Prelatical presumption is treated with undue respect in elections. And I dislike clerics telling me how to lead my life

Simon Jenkins

The Archbishop of Canterbury: exponent of a new moral correctness?

Every good election needs a bishop. As the argument gets acrimonious, as the soundbites start to sting, noses twitch across the Close. On goes the surplice and the mitre, down comes the Book of Platitudes. *The Times* is telephoned. A shiver runs through the middle classes as they prepare for a mild flagellation. Episcopal intervention in politics is like Rogantide or Lammas, a harmless feast without which England would not be England.

But is it harmless? This week it was the Archbishop of Canterbury who felt moved to utter. The Chief Rabbi had already thundered his new moral autocracy. The Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Rev David Sheppard, on Monday gave the unemployment debate his usual left-arm spin. Asked whether it was right to intervene in politics, he said that "underneath social and political issues lie spiritual truths ... politicians are not the only people who can bring about change."

Then on Thursday came Dr Carey's moment. "Trust has suddenly become a significant electoral word," he wrote, "and properly so ... Our society has become morally reticent, even inarticulate." He protested at the "popular cultural assumption that to try to define something as good and right in an absolute sense is an unwarranted and potentially oppressive incursion" on the private domain.

If I were to rewrite election law I would ban the word morality from the campaign. I would ban its derivatives, morals, moraliser, immoral and "remoralise", and exile to a hermit's cell all who broke the rule. Pulpit clichés and parsonical platitudes are one thing. Like 30-second phone-ins, party politicals and vapid manifestos, they are the background static of an election. But giving a moral overlay to an argument about policy is more than that. It seeks to add a magic ingredient to help that argument on its way.

In the case of Wednesday's Council of Churches' report on unemployment, the purpose was unmistakable. If Labour will not speak up for the poor, then the churches will. The report called for higher taxes on the rich, a national minimum wage, more rights for trade unions and a shorter working week. The report implied that higher redistributive taxes were a moral virtue and protested at the "moral indignation of the rich over the dishonesty of the poor". From a Labour candidate this would evoke no more than a call from Tony Blair's office, with orders to stand down and accept a peerage in the new Parliament. From a multi-faith church body it carries a protective halo. On presenting the report, Bishop Sheppard was not torn limb from limb by a BBC arm-wrestler. He was treated with the deference due to the cloth. You do not interrupt a bishop halfway through his first soundbite. The Force is with him.

Bishop Sheppard is an old trooper. He has used his pulpit to win more cash for Liverpool over the years than any other city in Britain. His diocese is an examplar of the public sector dependency he so fervently espouses. If his policies worked, Merseyside would by now be outperforming Silicon Valley. They have not worked. But at least the bishop carries his torch with panache. When Mr Blair reforms local government, he should stand as mayor of Liverpool and test his views on the hustings.

The Archbishop and the Chief Rabbi are treading a more subtle, and thus more dangerous, path. Both seek priority on the political agenda for their favourite policies, especially on education and the family, and do so by claiming that these policies contain a special moral yeast. We are nervous of absolutism, says Dr Carey. The relativist barbarians are at the gates. While Bishop Sheppard wants to make young mothers stay at home to look after their children, the Archbishop wants a shorter national curriculum so "morality" can be taught in school. Other authoritarians are about to ban hunting, tag parents of juvenile delinquents and appoint censors to investigate school books. Who knows where this will lead? The new moral correctness will make its political variety seem tame.

I see this as a concerted attempt to derationalise politics. We now have senior clergy variously declaring that a wider tax base, higher tax rates and, by implication, expanding public spending are "moral". They imply that (Tory) efforts to reduce the State are immoral. Higher social security spending is treated as good *a priori*. Single parenthood is evil. Divorced or separated parents are treated as moral defectives. The tax and benefit system should be changed to reflect this prejudice.

From other corners of the same wood we are told that it is moral to incarcerate young criminals in what I (and most other European states) would regard as barbaric conditions. It is moral to hold parents responsible for the crimes of their children and moral to oppose abortion. Morality is considered a "topic" in the school curriculum. Teachers must teach "what is right and wrong" on pain of dismissal. As for debating the reform of drugs laws, try doing so without at some point being accused of the most craven Socratic corruption.

Throwing dollops of morality at political arguments is pernicious. I incline to Tom Paine's view, that when two men claim to think alike on ethics they have probably not finished arguing. Of course we have moral sensibilities, and would like them to embrace family, friends, neighbourhoods, even nations. The problem is as old as Plato: how to handle clashes between our "shared values" and those of other individuals and groups.

Dr Carey rests his case for a more interventionist morality on the mere fact that he detects that shared values exist. I am not so sure. If the values are shared, what need have we of episcopal intervention? If they are not shared, whose values are we imposing?

Dr Carey protested in *The Times* this week that the new curriculum was only going to "describe" shared values. He was concerned not just about what was shared but what the Church believed "should be" shared. Note how easily the moralist slides from announcing a consensus to prescribing one. Dr Carey will doubtless say that I am nitpicking. His words were really ecclesiastical fog, meant as uplifting electoral jollity. Yet Dr Carey, like the Chief Rabbi, is careful to deride "false theories of privatised morality" and talk of "a society disfigured by widespread moral confusion". He knows what he is about: the extension of state power into the private lives of citizens. Bishops were once less timid about using morality as a political trump card. *Guarda il Gran Inquisitor.*

One man's shared values is another's superstitious meddling. I confess to preferring a privatised morality to a nationalised one. I dislike Dr Carey or the Chief Rabbi or the Home Secratary or the Chief Inspector of Schools telling me how to lead my life and bring up my children. And I take the old liberal view that what I dislike being done to me I should not want done to others.

In his book *After Virtue*, the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre links our "lost comprehension of morality" to the decay of old Aristotelian virtues. The rules of morality, half-remembered fragments of ancient cultures, were often a sub-class of authoritarian politics. Like Dr Carey's shared values, they were to be obeyed "because I say so". They were bound to wither in the sun of liberty. But what to put in their place? MacIntyre's answer was democracy, "the construction of local forms of community, within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained". This layered democracy should still sit in watch over the authoritarians of the Right and the libertarians of the Left — nowadays sometimes vice versa. A democracy settles all its disputes by treating them as political. Treat them as moral and the result is war.

Reducing unemployment, helping children out of poverty, handling drugs or countering crime can move us to passion, anger and moral outrage. If I hold any creed in this matter, it is that only democracy can resolve them. If there is confusion in Britain, it is caused by the decay of democratic institutions. Moral supremacy is for escapists. But for the moment, democracy has the floor. Give it a break, and let the bishops return to their cells.

THE TIMES DIARY

Golden tune

THOSE who want to witness the Jimmy Goldsmith shuffle should don their crepe-soled shoes and head towards Alexandra Palace in north London tomorrow. There, the gleamingly bald buccaneer will attend a rally, introduced for the first time by the party's new anthem, a single, *Let the People Decide*.

Let the People Decide (the Rabble Army Song), released on CD on Monday, is the work of former Motown songwriter and Walthamstow candidate for the Referendum Party, the Rev George Hargreaves, co-pastor with his wife Maxine, of the Hephzibah Christian Centre in Hackney.

Maxine: the Motown sound

Maxine sings on the record and is likened to Aretha Franklin by Hargreaves, who produced hit records for the well-endowed *chanteuse* Sinitta and wrote the signature tune for *Pebble Mill at One*.

"We expect the record to get into the top 40, and by election week it should be in the top ten," said Hargreaves yesterday. With a catchy refrain which runs "They're the Rabble Army singing 'let the people decide'," Hargreaves is confident that it will be a hit.

● *Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare has developed an interest in stonework calligraphy. He is particularly taken by an engraved piece of waxed Welsh slate on display at the Wolseley Fine Arts Gallery in Notting Hill. The engraving was of William Blake's words: Rest before Labour. I'm not sure that the "boss", as Archer likes to call John Major, would approve.*

Falling star

THE SITWELLS are in despair. Their brightest young protege, William Sitwell, great-nephew of Dame Edith and former squeeze of flushed-faced blonde broker Samantha Phillips, has taken voluntary redundancy from *The Express*. After working his way up from lean researcher to portly showbiz correspondent, he is looking around for gainful employment. Among his interests is the composition of "sensitive love poetry" — although he doesn't follow the example of his great-aunt, who recited her poems through a loud-hailer. "I'm looking at darts commentary," he said yesterday. "Ever since Sid Waddell left the BBC, I've thought there was a gap I could fill."

Good sport

A SHOT in the eye for the anti-hunting lobby comes from Lord Gillford, son of the Earl of Clanwilliam, a man who claims to have lost a finger as a result of a shooting accident on his stag night. Happiest trudging the moors with a 12-bore, the 36-year-old motorbike rider launches a magazine for the Barbour-clad this weekend with a solid wall of aristocracy behind him: a third of his founding subscribers are peers of the realm.

Gillford's magazine *The Sporting Twenty-Pager*, produced in association with the British Field Sports Society, kicks off with a forward from the Duke of Westminster and will contain newspaper extracts about field sports. "We've got eight dukes, dozens of earls and at least a brace of marquesses," he says. There's no doubt that a copy or two will find its way to Balmoral and Sandringham.

Only another 20 days to go

Speechless

ACCUSATIONS of a callous disregard for the Labour deputy leader John Prescott have been levelled at party apparatchiks in the London headquarters at Millbank Tower. Not only has Mr Prescott been sidelined from the main action in a bus tour of the provinces, but he has also been given a mobile phone which is useless.

Dispatched to Wales this week, he discovered that his modern cellular phone was out of range. "His signal is too weak," confirmed his office yesterday.

Not even his accompanying press secretary could help: "It's a very bad line," he said. "I can't hear you. You'll have to ring back."

Back to the press office in London. Is there any chance of getting through to Mr Prescott at all? "They are in a very bad area. Mobiles just come and go, you know how it is. It seems to be a bad reception area for some reason."

How long will he be incommunicado? "I don't know. It depends how big the bad area is. I *just don't* know how big the black spot is."

Kira Jolliffe: smoking out the bluffers in her poker club

Hot at poker

IN THE smoke-filled basements of west London's Notting Hill, they are talking of the 26-year-old fashion stylist whose weekly poker sessions are part of the gambler's calendar. Kira Jolliffe, daughter of the cartoonist Gray Jolliffe, represents British hopes at the Women's World Poker Championships in Las Vegas. Next month, she will show for the tournament at Binion's Horseshoe Casino to take on poker faces from Moscow to Madras. The minimum down payment of $1,000 is just an indication of what is to come. "I've heard that it's pure hedonism," she drawls.

P·H·S

WONDROUS THINGS

Mankind, magma and the limits of life in the solar system

In the middle of an election campaign it is particularly difficult to maintain a proper sense of proportion. A decade from now it may be obvious that the most significant event of April 1997 occurred in deep space, not a marginal constituency. The issue that dominated the party political press conferences yesterday was Europe. The question worth wider consideration is the implications of Europa.

Europa has played an important part in the path of human thinking for much longer than might be imagined. It was Galileo who, in 1610, first identified the largest moons of Jupiter, including Europa. The moment had a profound impact upon him. He had, he declared, seen "wondrous things" in the heavens. From that point he could not accept that the Earth was at the centre of the universe. That controversial view swiftly switched from heresy to orthodoxy.

Now a spacecraft named after the great 17th-century scientist has made what might prove an ever greater discovery. The pictures of Europa transmitted back by *Galileo* suggest that the surface of that distant place might sustain some form of existence. It certainly seems at least as strong a candidate as Mars, where a similar revelation caused a sensation last summer.

That belief stems as much from Earth as Europa. In recent years it has been postulated that life on this planet evolved from the bottom of the ocean. Liquid magma, warm and rich in chemicals, forced through to the sea floor, provided the preconditions for evolution. Those circumstances would appear to be matched on Europa. Nasa's photographs imply that the moon holds a deep ocean beneath a crust of ice alongside ample volcanic activity. If so, bacteria or other simple organisms could have developed.

At present this is little more than supposition. It relies entirely on an extremely limited body of evidence. A lot depends on whether what appear to be "icebergs" floating in a form of "sea" on Europa's surface stand up to further analysis. Validation will require much more exploration. As the distances involved are vast — *Galileo* was launched over seven years ago — we will not be able to test the theory until the first decade of the next century.

The endeavour is clearly worth the effort. Proof would transform much of what we have assumed from astronomy to theology. The fundamental purpose of our presence in space has always been as much what we would find out about ourselves as what we would discover on distant planets. There could be nothing more profound than life — of any type — not thousands of light years away but on our planetary doorstep.

That knowledge, though, will not come without a reordering of priorities. Since the 1960s politicians and the public have placed by far the greatest weight on manned exploration. Missions such as the *Galileo* probe have occupied a more modest place in funding. The relative scientific value of the two is rather different. Until the *Voyager* programme it was widely assumed that all the satellites of the outer planets were frozen cold and essentially similar. We have since found that there is enormous, unanticipated, variation to be found in our solar system. More has been learnt in the last 30 years than the whole of previous history.

The pressure of competing claims on Earth makes a vast increase in space expenditure improbable. Simply avoiding substantial cuts will require intense international co-operation. If our understanding is to be advanced then a renewed emphasis should be placed on unmanned exploration. That information will allow for far more ambitious manned activity later. In the past probes such as *Voyager* have captured mass attention for a week and then disappeared into oblivion. If the clues provided by *Galileo* can be confirmed, then this small metal messenger will be with us forever.

LABOUR TREMORS

Meanwhile back here on Earth the big question was . . .

Did Labour wobble this week? Conservative election spokesmen, sensing an unaccustomed vulnerability in the Opposition, lost no time in claiming that the Labour campaign was out of control and that Tony Blair was close to cracking up. Discounting the intergalactic rhetoric, it was certainly true that Labour's previously impregnable veneer has taken a battering and that its leaders, unused to the whistle of weaponry, have been slow to recover.

Mr Blair's first campaigning mistake was to rush to endorse the Tories' planned privatisation of the air traffic control system only weeks after his spokesmen had ruled it out. The policy may be a good one. Its adoption may have been dictated by a zealous determination to account for every penny of planned public spending. It may in the long run allow him to be more open-minded about privatisation. But on the same day as he was campaigning on the issue of trust, the shift made him look shifty.

Politicians always claim that they pay no attention to polls. But when the privatisation row was followed by a six-point drop for Labour and a six-point rise for the Tories in our MORI poll on Thursday, Mr Blair was clearly unnerved and Mr Major markedly cheered. The contrast between the Conservatives yesterday, brimming with bonhomie, and their strained and tetchy press conferences only a week ago was stark.

Yet the week did not go entirely the Government's way. It started with Neil Hamilton being adopted in Tatton, and Martin Bell launching his anti-corruption campaign. Then the Institute for Fiscal Studies confirmed Labour's claim that the tax burden has increased. By yesterday divisions over Europe, which had been buried for three weeks, began to re-emerge. The change in the perception of success lay in the reaction of the two leaders. Mr Major, paradoxically, is in an enviable position: things, to quote the Labour song, can only get better. The polls are beginning to narrow. Defeat on May 1 has already been discounted, but every point in the polls that he gains will be seen as a personal victory. Mr Major is experienced at fighting apparently unwinnable campaigns and enjoys them.

Mr Blair may be some 20 points ahead, but for him the campaign is far more difficult. He knows that he will be blamed for every drop in the polls. He has to win this election more or less single-handed, and is fearful of making mistakes. He is still a novice at electioneering, and seemed unprepared for the fierceness of the onslaught when it came.

Labour's policies are being the more rigorously scrutinised because Labour is the more likely next government. The campaign leadership may not like it but this is inevitable and right. Until recently the imbalance was in the other direction; it is now Labour's turn to be tested under fire.

Mr Blair has a strong character that should be able to withstand such treatment. But he is allowing himself to be corraled to such an extent that he appears defensive, even rattled. He should break out from the constraints laid down by his aides and allow his normal personality — confident, witty, self-deprecating and expansive — to reassert itself. A head-to-head debate with Mr Major, as we set out in our *Times* challenge yesterday, would be the perfect opportunity. If Labour is slow to come to the table, Mr Blair's controllers will have won.

BRAVO, POP MAESTRO

Music should be a public ocean not a private swimming-pool

The barricades of elitism that hinder the mass appreciation of classical music are being breached once more. This week two instrumental virtuosos, on opposite sides of the Atlantic, experienced triumphs of a particularly encouraging nature.

In America the trumpeter and composer Wynton Marsalis — whose mastery of classical and jazz styles is a wonder of the age — has won the Pulitzer Prize for his three-hour oratorio about American slavery, *Blood on the Fields*. Marsalis is following the route pioneered by Gershwin 70 years ago: having recruited a vast following through his genius in popular genres, he is now enticing them, Pied-Piper-style, into more challenging areas. No wonder that the New York Philharmonic and other American orchestras have commissioned works from him. Their greying audiences desperately need the regeneration that his young, ethnically diverse fans can bring.

Meanwhile in London on Thursday the British violinist Nigel Kennedy returned to playing classical music in public after a five-year absence. He was in magnificent form, but that was not the only reason for celebration. Defying every stuffy "rule" of programming, he interlaced Bartók's Sonata for Solo Violin — a savage masterpiece that would normally empty a concert hall at 50 paces — with a succession of dazzling Jimi Hendrix arrangements. Such was the mesmerising quality of his playing that an audience of 3,000 was transfixed. Few classical soloists share Kennedy's empathy with vintage rock music, just as few jazz musicians have the confidence to strike up relationships with orchestras. That only makes their achievements more admirable. Regrettably, however, both have been targets of purist sneers, accusations that they are vulgarising their art-forms and betraying their true constituencies in search of wider fame. The reverse is true. It is the musicians who lock themselves into ivory towers who are jeopardising the future of serious musicmaking.

In missionary work nothing succeeds like charisma: the magnetic personality who can inspire millions. Bernstein was such a figure; his easy transitions between Broadway and Carnegie Hall convinced a generation of American music lovers that they could do the same. Beecham had the same populist instinct. He would have applauded the principle of mixing Bartók and Hendrix: he did much the same thing himself, albeit with music of a gentler hue.

Kennedy and Marsalis are their spiritual successors. In some quarters of the musical establishment they will always be regarded with hostility. But the cheers in the Festival Hall on Thursday, and in the Barbican last month when Marsalis premiered his stupendous oratorio, confirmed that they are both engaged in something of huge importance to our cultural life. Encore, maestros.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Blair, unions and the bill to be paid

From Mr Denis Dodds

Sir, The personal "integrity" of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown is not in question. The real issue new Labour presents is not one of integrity but of credibility. Despite internal differences, the party has been able to present a united front to the public, at nearly all costs, in the interest of gaining power. Internal critics, silent at present but I suspect privately incensed, are well aware that voicing opposition to policies could cost new Labour the election.

They are well aware, too, that once victory has been achieved the need for such discipline will disappear. Public as well as private pressure can then be brought to bear on a government, free at last of election pressures but dependent nevertheless on the co-operation of powerful interest groups within the party for success in implementing economic policy.

Trade union leaders have dismissed accusations that they are shunning major public appearances to avoid clashes with Labour (report, April 4). But having contributed substantially to new Labour's election expenses, unions will undoubtedly "send in the bill" if Labour gains power. In doing so they may again make Britain's Government as powerless as in the chaotic days of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan.

Trade unions are centres of power in their own right; power which can be applied with particular force to Labour in office. They have their own agenda quite separate and distinct from that of new Labour.

Is it not, in these circumstances, entirely legitimate to question whether assurances that new Labour would in fact be able to deliver the Conservative policies now adopted are really credible, or whether the roadblock of trade union opposition would not ultimately be reimposed.

Yours faithfully,
DENIS DODDS,
Corners, 28 Grange Park,
Westbury on Trym, Bristol.
April 8.

Election 97

From Dr Geoffrey M. Seeff

Sir, Following the report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies on Labour's plans for a windfall tax (article, Business, April 10), it is abundantly clear what the Labour Party is really saying to utilities: "We want £5 billion. We have no rational basis for assessing you for additional tax but hand it over, otherwise our regulator could make life extremely difficult for you."

The utilities are big and bad enough to look after themselves. However, is the electorate of this country seriously thinking of putting into government a party whose sole policy for raising additional revenue is redolent of methods used in 1930s Chicago?

Yours faithfully,
G. M. SEEFF (Prospective
Parliamentary Candidate
for Chingford and Woodford
Green (Liberal Democrat)),
32c Churchfields,
South Woodford, E18.
April 10.

From Mr Gerald Solomon

Sir, Mr R. M. Matheson (letter, April 4) should know that Gordon Brown has already stated that he will not increase the basic rate of income tax. Therefore Mr Matheson cannot look forward to 22 tax cuts, as it was only the imposition of the 22 rises which made it possible to reduce the basic rate.

Tory Chancellors believe (justifiably, I am afraid) that the only tax concept which most of the electorate can comprehend is the comparatively unimportant basic rate of income tax.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD SOLOMON,
Sylvan, Pwllglas, Denbighshire.
April 5.

From Mr David M. Evans

Sir, Today you report that Tony Blair's neighbour, Ms O'Rourke, does not begrudge the Blairs' decision to abandon the local school system in Islington and send their boys to a grant-maintained school in Fulham.

As a parent I do not begrudge the Blairs' decision, but the stench of hypocrisy does choke me. Mr Blair, it seems to me, has spent his political career trying to deny other parents the choice which he enjoys. I only hope that when the Blair children grow up they will have the honesty to thank John Major rather than their father.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID M. EVANS,
The Ill Tuns,
St Nicholas, South Glamorgan.
April 4.

From Mr Rajnikant J. Mehta

Sir, After his support for privatisation, the only thing Mr Tony Blair needs to do now is to change the name of his party to "new Conservative" and perhaps a few of us may reconsider our voting intentions.

Yours democratically,
RAJNIKANT J. MEHTA,
R & R Management Services,
212a Signal House,
Lyon Road, Harrow, Middlesex.
April 8.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

Church approach to unemployment

From Mr Ken Coates, MEP for Nottinghamshire North and Chesterfield (Socialist Group (Labour))

Sir, We must all welcome the publication of the report by the Joint Council of Churches on *Unemployment and the Future of Work* (details, April 8, later editions; leading article, April 9). The report is absolutely right to say that

> the political parties are competing for votes by promising low taxation. When so many are living in poverty and unemployment, it is wrong to give priority to the claims of those who are already well off. None of the political parties has put forward a programme which offers much real hope of improvement to those in greatest need.

The crucial questions of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion have been almost totally ignored by leading politicians. The Churches have offered us an eight-point programme aimed at tackling these problems.

To be fair, some parties have announced their willingness to meet one or two of these points, but it is because the political classes have shown their inability to take action against the problems which the report defines that many of our people have become profoundly sceptical about the state of politics in this country.

Mass unemployment leads to widespread exclusion from social life and undermines social cohesion, our support for one another. If the Churches can see this, why can't the politicians? I hope that British electors, including churchpeople, will question all the candidates about these issues and make it plain that they expect a concerned response.

Yours sincerely,
KEN COATES,
8 Regent Street,
Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.
April 9.

From the Reverend Richard Fothergill

Sir, I would like to wholly endorse your leading article today, "Motes and beams", on the Church and its confused approach towards poverty in Britain.

As a fairly recently ordained minister I was amazed at the effort and energy during my training years (Trinity College, Bristol, 1991-93) which were put into the study of Christian politics. This was undoubtedly a worthy topic, but the only political conclusions that were ever acceptable were rehashed socialist ones.

A rather tired interventionist social policy was always the remedy put forward, other alternatives being seen as suspect and probably a sign of spiritual weakness. I understand that this view is still common in Anglican training colleges, to a greater or lesser degree, and reflects the recent report by the Joint Council.

My only comfort is that the Church, being 20 years behind in its political policy, might quite soon be entering a Thatcherite era of emphasis on personal responsibility.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD FOTHERGILL,
29 St Margaret's Road,
Twickenham, Middlesex.
April 9.

From the Archdeacon of Lewisham and the Reverend Jonathan Lloyd

Sir, Your leading article may be right to indicate a legitimate difference of view on the economic strategies most appropriate for responding to the unacceptably high unemployment levels in this country. We regard it as wrong, however, to attempt to polarise individual and social morality, and to suggest that the Church's only concern is with the individual.

"Scripture and tradition" do not only offer moral guidelines for individuals; they do so in the context of community and social ethics, which indicate a proper role for the State in the purposes of God — namely to enable the provision of a social environment in which order and justice may be established and in which goodness may grow.

The Kingdom of God, to which the Christian faith points, cannot be reduced simply to individual voluntary philanthropy.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID ATKINSON,
Archdeacon of Lewisham,
JONATHAN LLOYD
(Bishop's Officer for Church in Society,
Diocese of Southwark),
3a Court Farm Road,
Mottingham, SE9.
April 9.

Organ restoration

From Dr Richard Godfrey

Sir, Last month you reported a row at Crathie kirk, Balmoral, over whether the Willis pipe organ there should be restored at a reputed cost of £150,000 (details, March 17). This huge sum, if correct, needs careful scrutiny and investigation: it suggests that either the organ itself is enormous (which seems unlikely in a modest country kirk) or that the parish is being taken for a ride.

In churches throughout the Salisbury diocese a number of Victorian pipe organs are restored every year by local small-scale but excellent organ builders, with costs usually in the £5,000 to £15,000 range, depending on the size and quality of the instrument.

It is regrettable that pipe organs, already under threat from dwindling interest in traditional church affairs, are also undermined by sometimes preposterous over-pricing from organ builders. Add to that the blandishments of electronic marketeers, with their relatively cheap simulations, and the future for the pipe organ is bleak indeed.

As any serious student of the organ knows, a well made Victorian instrument offers lasting value for money and a richness of sound which neither tires the listener nor bores the player. It is to be hoped that Crathie kirk is looking hard for a less expensive builder to restore its pipe organ, and that this instrument (and many others) are preserved and cherished for future generations.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD GODFREY
(Organ adviser, Salisbury diocese),
The Wardenry, Church Road,
Farley, Salisbury, Wiltshire.
April 8.

Royal exhibition

From Mr Malcolm Horsman

Sir, My understanding is that the exhibition, *Victoria and Albert, Vicky and the Kaiser*, currently at the German Historical Museum in Berlin, will not be shown in the United Kingdom.

This is a great pity. This excellent exhibition, coupled with the recently published book by Anna Pakula, *The Uncommon Woman*, gives a fascinating insight for this generation into a royal marital alliance which tragically did not produce the international accord hoped for. Even the KG and a field marshal's baton did not stop Vicky's son, Wilhelm II, waging war on his grandmother's countrymen and women.

I believe it of vital historical importance that arrangements be made for the exhibition and its remarkable objects, many lent by the Queen, to be shown on this side of the Channel. I am convinced that it would show sceptics that, for all the criticism, the European Union is a more hopeful 20th-century means of cementing mutual aspirations than the royal arrangements of the 19th century.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM HORSMAN,
Reform Club, Pall Mall, SW1.
April 8.

Sinn Fein and IRA

From Mr Geoffrey Sadow

Sir, Sinn Fein is described as the political wing of the IRA yet it denies any direct links with the latter. Could this be tested in the courts? Suppose that Sinn Fein is sued for the millions of pounds' worth of damage which the IRA has caused.

If this action were legally valid I suggest that in the meantime, pending the outcome, Sinn Fein's funds should be frozen. The bombers must be getting financial backing from somewhere.

Yours faithfully,
G. J. SADOW,
5 Pond Close, Burwood Park,
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.
April 7.

Joys of the road

From Mr A. C. Young

Sir, May I assure Mr John Mendes (letter, April 9) that, while reading with sympathy his lament for the camaraderie on the road generated by his bygone MGB, there are alternative riches at hand for those of mature years.

I refer of course to those enjoyed by the born-again biker. For a comparatively modest capital outlay a compact, high-performance, beautifully designed and engineered means of transport, fully air-conditioned, can be his. It will outperform his four-wheeled machine in almost every way, not least in pure pleasure.

Furthermore, ownership gives admission to a delightful club, and even here two wheels excel: not only the friendly wave (left-handed) and the flashing of lights, but also the biker's nod. The one possible deficiency is that not many of this friendly club are women. A pity.

Yours faithfully,
A. C. YOUNG,
14 Pennant Hills,
Bedhampton, Havant, Hampshire.
April 9.

From Mr Peter Tandy

Sir, I suggest that if Mr Mendes wishes to drive a car with character and also enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded motorists, he should buy a Morris Minor. My 1969 model is a suitable vehicle for a driver of any age and is easily capable of maintaining adequate speeds to keep up with modern A-road traffic.

Journeys are regularly enhanced by exchanging waves with fellow owners, although we rarely flash headlights — these cars were built before the now ubiquitous column-mounted flasher was considered necessary and, in any event, is a wave not a more suitable and personal greeting?

Yours faithfully,
PETER TANDY,
63 Park Court,
Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.
April 9.

Weekend Money letters, page 43

Colour version of 'The Longest Day'

From the Director of the British Film Institute

Sir, I wonder if any of your readers saw the screening of *The Longest Day* on LWT on Sunday afternoon? As far as I know this was the first time that a "colourised" feature has been shown on UK terrestrial television .

Interestingly, LWT had been careful not to publicise this premiere. All publicity, including their press release for the transmission, announced a normal black and white showing.

Besides the hideous overall look of the film the colouring led to some memorable howlers such as Leo Genn (who was playing a high-ranking Army officer) wearing a blue RAF-colour uniform.

Is it not unfortunate that the floodgates should be opened just two weeks after Fred Zinnemann's death (obituary, March 17), bearing in mind his long-standing fight against this process becoming commonplace in Britain? I hope others who feel strongly about this will write to the broadcasters.

Yours sincerely,
WILF STEVENSON,
Director,
British Film Institute,
21 Stephen Street, W1.
April 7.

Honourable discharge

From Mr Roy Roebuck

Sir, My former parliamentary colleague, Sir William van Straubenzee, who urges (letter, April 8) that Members of Parliament should be accorded the title "MP Emeritus" on retirement, has overlooked the benevolent provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Has his proposal anything to do with Mr Michael Howard's plans for tagging offenders, or is it an attempt to outflank Mr Tony Blair's policy on being "tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime"?

I have the honour to remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ROY ROEBUCK
(Labour MP for Harrow East,
1966-70),
Bell Yard Chambers,
116-118 Chancery Lane, WC2.
April 8.

From Mr Fritz Spiegl

Sir, It is true that modern dictionaries define *emeritus* as "one who has served his time . . . honourably discharged from active service or office", but Lewis and Short, in their Latin dictionary (1879), give the original meaning quoting Tacitus, Cicero, etc: "[One who] has become unfit for service, worn out".

Yours faithfully,
FRITZ SPIEGL,
4 Windermere Terrace,
Liverpool, Merseyside.
April 8.

From Mr Paul C. M. Solon

Sir, On his retirement, Professor Stephen Leacock, the noted Canadian academic and humorist, was awarded the title "Emeritus".

When someone asked him what it meant, he allegedly offered the following definition: "It is a Latin compound of the words 'ex' meaning 'out' and 'meritus' meaning 'because he deserved to be'."

This strikes me as equally appropriate for our MPs, but perhaps only those who lose their seats, as opposed to those who retire of their own accord.

Yours truly,
P. C. M. SOLON,
Great Kimble House,
Great Kimble,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.
April 10.

Myths of history

From Dr N. Earl Mawby

Sir, In debunking the myths of history in the forthcoming BBC television series, *A History of Britain* (report, April 4), I hope that the series editor will correct her assertion that the Pastons were a 15th-century Kent family.

The family of Paston derives its name from that of a Norfolk coastal village about 20 miles north of Norwich: and my ancestral tree avers that the Margaret Paston who wrote the majority of the letters in question was the daughter of a Margaret Mauteby, of Mautby, from which my name is derived.

Yours etc,
N. EARL MAWBY,
23 Bertram Drive,
Great Meols, Wirral, Cheshire.
April 8.

In gear for Marathon

From Mr Mark Davies

Sir, Are there really 25 women planning to walk Sunday's London Marathon, as your Diary reports (April 10), "wearing nothing but a Wonderbra above the waist"? Or would it be fairer to say that they will be wearing nothing above the waist but a Wonderbra?

Yours faithfully,
MARK DAVIES,
91 Onslow Gardens, SW7.
April 10.

COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 11: The Vestry of Trinity Church, Wall Street, were received by The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this afternoon and remained to Tea.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 11: The Princess Royal, President, Riding for the Disabled Association, accompanied by Captain Timothy Laurence RN, this morning visited Angus Riding for the Disabled Group and opened the South Bottymyre Centre, Inverarity, by Forfar, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Angus (the Earl of Airlie KT).

Her Royal Highness this afternoon opened the new Sheriff Court, West Bell Street, Dundee, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Dundee (Mr Mervyn Rolfe, the Lord Provost).

The Princess Royal, President, Save the Children Fund, later visited the shop at 147 High Street, Arbroath, Angus.

KENSINGTON PALACE
April 11: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present today at a Luncheon to commemorate World Parkinson's Disease Day, held at Lancaster House, St James's, London SW1.

April 11: The Duchess of Gloucester, President, Civil Service Sports Council, this morning received Sir Anthony Battishill, Chairman of the Council, and Mr Frank Krinks on relinquishing his appointment as General Secretary.

Later Her Royal Highness, Patron, Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (Cot Death Research and Support), received Mr Charles de Selincourt on relinquishing his appointment as Chairman of the Foundation and Mr Colin Baker on assuming the appointment.

YORK HOUSE
April 11: The Duke of Kent, Vice-Chairman, the British Overseas Trade Board, today received Madam Wu Wenying, Chairman, the China National Textile Council, at Kingsgate House, Victoria Street, London SW1.

Service dinners

Royal Warwickshire Regiment
Lieutenant-General Sir Jeremy Reilly presided at the annual dinner of the Dinner Club of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment (Sixth Foot) held last night at the Shire Hall, Warwick.

The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)
General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, Colonel of the Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons) was in the chair at a regimental dinner held last night at the Caledonian Club.

***RAF Oxford and Cambridge* Society**
Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon and Professor Robert O'Neill, of Oxford University, were the guests of honour at the annual dinner of the RAF Oxford and Cambridge Society held last night in Keble College, Oxford. Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss, chairman, presided.

Dinners

Securities Institute
Mr Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, was the principal guest at a dinner of the Securities Institute held on Thursday at Guildhall. Mr Graham Ross Russell, chairman, presided.

North of England Surgical Society
Mr R.J. Heald delivered the Pybus lecture to the North of England Surgical Society last night at Durham Castle. Afterwards, Mr M.G. Whittaker, president of the society, presided at a dinner and presented the Pybus Medal to Mr Heald. Dr John Caldbeck-Meenan and Mr A.H. Tooley also spoke.

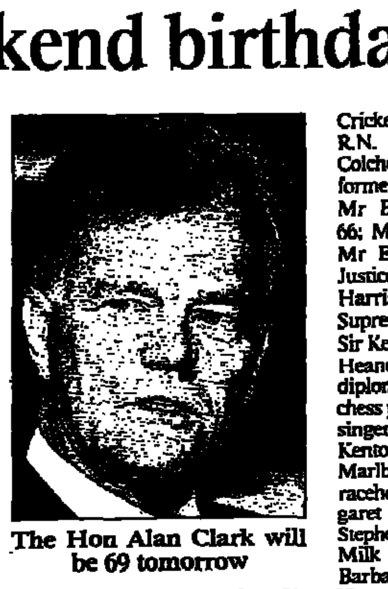
Patron

Prince Michael of Kent has become Patron of the Institute of Certified Book-keepers.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Sir Alan Ayckbourn, playwright, 58; Mr Bill Bryden, theatre director, 55; Miss Montserrat Caballé, opera singer, 64; Mr Brian Connell, writer and broadcaster, 81; Miss Elspet Gray (Lady Rix), actress, 68; Mr H.R. Hewitt, former chairman, Johnson Matthey, 77; the Right Rev John T. Hughes, former Bishop to the Forces, 89; Mr Uwe Kitzinger, former President, Templeton College, Oxford, 69; the Earl of Limerick, 67; Mr A.W. Mabbs, archivist, 76; Mr Bryan Magee, writer, 67; Air Marshal Sir Harold Maguire, 85; Mr E.C. Meade, chartered accountant, 74; Dr Hilary Nicolle, educationist, 52; Lady Ricketts, former chairman, National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, 78; Mrs Wendy Savage, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 62.

TOMORROW: The Kabaka of Buganda celebrates his 42nd birthday today.



The Hon Alan Clark will be 69 tomorrow

Miss Audrey Barker, writer, 79; Mr Stephen Byers, MP, 44; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Bernard Chacksfield, 84; Mr Frank Chamberlain, former chairman, Test and County Cricket Board, 72; the Right Rev R.N. Coote, former Bishop of Colchester, 82; Mr Liam Cosgrave, former leader, Fine Gael Party, 77; Mr Beverley Cross, playwright, 66; Mr Peter Davison, actor, 46; Mr Edward Fox, actor, 60; Mr Justice Harman, 67; Mr Peter M. Harris, Official Solicitor to the Supreme Court, 60; Air Marshal Sir Kenneth Hayr, 62; Mr Seamus Heaney, poet, 58; Sir Peter Heap, diplomat, 62; Mr Garry Kasparov, chess player, 34; Mr Howard Keel, singer and actor, 78; Mr Godfrey Kenton, actor, 95; the Duke of Marlborough, 71; Mr Jonjo O'Neill, racehorse trainer, 45; Dame Margaret Price, opera singer, 56; Sir Stephen Roberts, former chairman, Milk Marketing Board, 82; Mrs Barbara Roche, MP, 43; Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, industrialist, 76; Lord Wedderburn of Charlton, QC, 70; Sir John Weston, diplomat, 59; Lieutenant-General Sir James Wilson, 76.

Memorial services

Sir Bryan Roberts, QC
The Lord Chancellor was represented by Sir Thomas Legg, QC, at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Sir Bryan Roberts, QC, a former Attorney-General and Cabinet Secretary in Malawi, held yesterday in the Crypt Chapel of St Paul's Cathedral.

The Very Rev Dr John Moses, Dean of St Paul's, officiated, assisted by the Rev John Paul, Sacrist, and the Rev 'Seye Olumide, Hospital Chaplain and Spiritual Care Co-ordinator, Parkside Health NHS Trust.

Mr Michael Charlton and the High Commissioner for Malawi read the lessons. Lord Ackner gave an address. Among those present were:

Lady Roberts (widow), Dr Peter Vernon, Mr and Mrs J N Wood, Mr and Mrs Peter Torry, Emma, Harriet and Katherine Torry, Mr and Mrs Alex Waespy, Mr Peter May, Mr and Mrs Alistair Gavin, Mr and Mrs Ian Campbell.

Lady Ackner, Helen Lady Delves Broughton, Sir Gerard and Lady Waterlow, Lady Legg, Sir Thomas Skyrme, Sir Robin Haydon, Sir Henry and Lady Phillips, Lady (Brigitte) Roberts.

Mr James Tweed (vice-president, North Atlantic and Mediterranean Region Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association) with Ms Vivienne Chinn (secretary general), Mr Andreas Loizou (life vice-president, Cyprus) and other members of the association; Mr Peter Badge (Chief Metropolitan Magistrate) and Mrs Badge, Mr S Chimombo (Malawi Contacts Group), Dr Michael Tadman (honorary secretary, Friends of Malawi Association) and Mrs Tadman with Mr Robert Dewar and Mr Derek Reynolds.

Professor Colin Baker (Glamorgan University), Mr Keith Madders (Zimbabwe Trust), Mr Michael Huebner (chief executive, Court Service), the Master of the Stationers' and Newspaper Makers' Company and Mrs Fullick, Mr P Goodday and Mr M Burke (Inner London Magistrate Courts Service), Mr Alan Older (president, Old Whitgiftian Association) with Mr John Lindblom and Mr Russell Bailey; Mr Peter Truelove (Magdalen Society) and Mrs Truelove, Mr V T A Hadrys and Mr G Davison (Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club).

Judge and Mrs Barrington Black, Mr Justice and Mrs Bewley, His Honour Ralph H Lownie, Judge and Mrs Robert Smyth, Mr Ralph Smyth, Miss Audrey Jennings, Dr Jeffrey Tobias, Mr David Voelcker, Mrs Michael Charlton, Professor and Mrs Antony Allott, Mr John Heritage, Miss C Lee, Mr M A Johnstone, Mr David Williams, Mr Nigel Wenban-Smith, Mrs Elizabeth Hurst, Dr and Mrs William Vellacott, Ms Pat Murphy, Mr Graham Garden.

Mr Anthony Mitchell-Heggs, Mr Graham Turner, Mr James Bourn, Mr Shamoon Somjee, Mr Graham Clixby, Mrs Rosemary Thomson, Dr Eric Dux, Mrs Diana Edelsten, Mr and Mrs Andras Kaldor, Mr David Bennett, Dr John and Dr Mary Buchanan, Mr and Mrs Jeremy Love, Dr Roger King, Mr Ian Lecky, Miss Anthea Hanhart, Mr and Mrs Tim Bellers, Mr and Mrs Robert Marshall, Mr Tony Austin, Mr and Mrs Robert Wase-Bailey, Mrs Gerald Gordon, Mr and Mrs Simon Broadbent, Mr and Mrs Bryan Blatch, Mr Cyril Rolo and many other friends and colleagues.

Professor Hans W. Kosterlitz, FRS
A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Professor Hans Kosterlitz, FRS, Emeritus Professor of the Department of Pharmacology and Honorary Director of the Unit for Research on Addictive Drugs at Aberdeen University, was held yesterday in King's College Chapel, Old Aberdeen.

The Rev Dr Duncan Heddle, officiated. Dr Alistair Corbett, of Glasgow Caledonian University, and Professor Derek Ogston, Senior Vice-Principal of Aberdeen University read the lessons.

Professor Anthony Milton, Professor of Immunopharmacology, Cambridge University, Professor John Hughes, FRS, Park-Davis Neuroscience Research Centre, Cambridge, Dr Alan North, FRS, of the Geneva Biomedical Research Institute, and Professor Stephen Logan, Professor of Neuroscience, Aberdeen University, paid tribute.

Dr Gordon Lees, flute, gave a musical tribute.

School news

The Mount School, York
The Summer Term commences on Sunday, April 13, when boarders return. There is an Open Morning for prospective parents and children on Saturday, April 19, 1997, at 10.00am.

Scholarships for the academic year 1997/98 have been awarded to Emma Blane (Pickhill School, Thirsk), Elsie Brewster (Tregelles, Junior Department of The Mount School), Emma Cole (Tregelles, Junior Department of The Mount School), Emma Delaney (Clifton Preparatory School, York), Elizabeth Garthwaite (St Andrew's School, Malton), Larissa Hansford (Sancton Wood School, Cambridge), Abigale Hope-Urwin (Newcastle Preparatory School), Lyndsay Coo (International School, Geneva), Rebecca Fong (St Olave's School, York).

Walhampton School, Lymington, Hampshire
Summer term starts April 20 after a record number of Scholarships were won in the Spring. Mr Andrew Robinson retires in July and the School will merge with Hordle House under a new Principal, Mr Adrian Gobat, in September. OWs are invited to a Thanksgiving Service for the life of John Bradfield on April 26, at noon, also to a Grande Pageant on June 21; further details from School Secretary.

Westonbirt School
Scholarships and Exhibitions for 1997 have been awarded to the following:

Scholarships
Narisa Cherdjareewatananon, Westonbirt School; Alice Collinson, Beaudesert Park School, Minchinhampton; Hannah Ewan, New Hall School, Chelmsford; Annabel Jenkin, Rose Hill School, Hillesley; Emily Stephenson, Hopelands School, Stonehouse.

Exhibitions
Rosie Clarkson, Beaudesert Park School, Minchinhampton; Antonia Hall, Westonbirt School.

The University of Durham

Former Students of the University of Durham (including King's, Armstrong and Teacher Training Colleges) should have received the Spring edition (no:5) of *Durham First*, the University of Durham's magazine. Anyone who has not done so is invited to contact the Development Office, Old Shire Hall, Durham, DH1 3HP for despatch of a copy (or tel: 0191 374 4682).

Forthcoming marriages

Mr S.B.V. Burge and Miss S.J. Cooper
The engagement is announced between Sebastian, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Burge, of Glen Usk, Monmouthshire, and Sarah, daughter of Group Captain and Mrs James Cooper, of High Hurstwood, East Sussex.

Mr M.A. Butler and Miss S.H.W. Hunt
The engagement is announced between Michael Andrew, second son of Mr and Mrs Arthur Butler, of Derby, and Susannah Helen Wendy, younger daughter of Professor and Mrs Garry Hunt, of Wimbledon and Bournemouth.

Mr P.H. Dickson and Miss R.B. Foster
The engagement is announced between Peter, son of the late Mr John Heron Dickson, of Lammas, Norfolk, and Mrs Sheila O'Beney, of the Isle of Mull, and Ruth, daughter of Mr Henry Foster and the late Mrs Rosemary Foster, of Campbell Town, Tasmania.

Mr A.W.D.N. Edwards and Miss H.E. Evans
The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Mr Neale Edwards, of Chaffcombe, Somerset, and Mrs Raymond Clifford-Turner, of London, and Harriet, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs W.B.C. Evans, of Elston, Nottinghamshire.

Mr R.J. Fagan and Miss K.J. Marsh
The engagement is announced between Richard Joseph, elder son of Mr and Mrs Richard Oliver Fagan, of Iver Heath, Buckinghamshire, and Kendy Jane, only daughter of Mr Keith Marsh and Mrs Margaret Marsh, of Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

Mr F.W.M. Fordham and Miss C.J. Warman
The engagement is announced between Finn, youngest son of Professor and Mrs Max Fordham, of Camden, London, and Caroline Jane, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Warman, of Dulwich, London.

Mr S.F. Hamilton and Miss J.H.R. Dillon
The engagement is announced between Sebastian, son of Mr and Mrs Nigel Hamilton, of Pimlico, London, and Joanne, daughter of Mr and Mrs Alan Dillon, of Scarborough, North Yorkshire.

Mr S.A.W. Heather and Miss S.F. Spence
The engagement is announced between Stephen, eldest son of Dr and Mrs Michael Heather, of Durham, and Sarah, daughter of Mrs William Bale, of Bishops Lydeard, Somerset.

Mr R.W. Huggins and Miss P.E. Firth
The engagement is announced between Richard, younger son of the late Mr George Huggins and of Mrs Alma Huggins, of Norfolk, and Paula, youngest daughter of the late Mr John Firth and of Mrs Florence Firth, of Edgware, Middlesex.

Mr P.S.M. Henry and Miss T.M. Germing
The engagement is announced between Paul, only son of Mr and Mrs W.M. Henry, of Newbury, Berkshire, and Tara, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs W.J. Germing, of London.

Mr K. Jones and Miss M.R. Bowesman
The engagement is announced between Keith, son of the late Mr Horace Jones and of Mrs Cynthia Jones, of Rhymney, South Wales, and Melanie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Raymond Bowesman, of Gloucester.

Mr P.G. Noone and Miss G.C. Peake
The engagement is announced between Patrick, son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Noone, of Claremorris, Co Mayo, Eire, and Georgina, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Philip Peake, of Hurst, Berkshire.

Mr J. O'Brien and Miss A.L. Downing
The engagement is announced between James, son of the Revd and Mrs John O'Brien of Twigworth, Gloucestershire, and Anna, elder daughter of Mr Hartley Downing, of Solihull, West Midlands, and Mrs Heather Mead, of Bourton on the Water, Gloucestershire.

Mr J.W. Rooney and Miss H.L. Tennant
The forthcoming marriage is announced and will take place on Saturday, April 19, at Weybridge, Surrey, between John Rooney and Helen Tennant.

Mr J. Somerville and Miss P. Butler Markham
The engagement is announced between Jonathan, son of Mr and Mrs M. Somerville, and Petra, daughter of Mr and Mrs L. Butler Markham.

Mr R.C. Taylor and Miss L.K. Bromwich
The engagement is announced between Richard, eldest son of Mr Dick Taylor, of Harleston, Suffolk, and Mrs Joanna Merrills, of Ampthill, Bedfordshire, and Laura, eldest daughter of Mr Peter Bromwich, OBE, of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, and Mrs Sally Bromwich, of Salcombe, Devon.

Marriages

Mr C.W.B. Cook and Mrs E.C. Faber
The marriage took place quietly in London, on Friday, April 11, 1997, between Mr Christopher Cook and Mrs Emma Faber.

Mr R.F. Miller and Miss S.D. Boyd
The marriage took place on Saturday, April 5, at Glasgow Central Elim Pentecostal Church, between Richard Frederick, son of Mr Keith Miller, of Leith, and Mrs Wakerley-Perkins, of Chudleigh, Devon, and Susan Dunkeld, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Iain Boyd, of Ashurst, Hampshire.

A reception was held at the House for an Art Lover, Bellahouston Park.

Church services tomorrow

Second Sunday after Easter

ST ANDREWS CATHEDRAL, ABERDEEN: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch; 6.30 Choral E.

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 M, Since by man came death (Handel), Rev W Ferguson; 3.15 Choral E, & Litany, Brewer in D, Sing we merrily (Batten).

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch, Stanford in B flat, How beautiful upon the mountains (Stainer); 3.30 Choral E, Kelly in C, O for a closer walk with God (Stanford).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Stainer in A, Christ is now risen again (Isaac), Let all mortal flesh (Bairstow), Rev M Fisher; 4 Choral E, Stanford in B flat, Blessed be the God and Father (Wesley).

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 11 Euch, Henry Ley in E minor, Canon G Hughes; 3.30 E, Stanford in B flat, The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford).

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL, College Green: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Ch Euch, Christe eleison (Victoria), Mass for trebles (Latham), Gaelic blessing (Rutter), Canon A Redfern; 3.30 Choral E, Sumsion in G, Let all the world (Vaughan Williams), Canon P Johnson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M; 11 S Euch, Missa O quam gloriosum (Victoria), Jesu the very thought of thee (Bairstow), Rt Rev F Sargeant; 3.15 E, Gloucester Service (Vann), The Walk (Moorse); 6.30 Compline, Rev R Symon.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Aston in F, Christ the Lord is risen (Foster), Canon R Chapman; 3 E, Moeran in D, This joyful Eastertide (Wood).

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon B Thompson; 9.30 Euch, Canon D Knight; 11.15 Choral M, Collegium Regale (Howells), Jubilate (Britten in E flat), Sing we merrily (Campbell), The Acting Provost; 6 Choral E, Watson in E, My shepherd is the living Lord (Tomkins), Canon B Thompson.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Euch, Ave verum corpus (Mozart), Canon M Rees; 11.30 Baby Loss Service, Call to Remembrance (Farrant), O be joyful in the Lord (Stanford); 3.30 Choral E, Sumsion in G, O sing joyfully (Batten); 6.30 ES, The Archdeacon.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M & Sermon, Canon O'Donovan; 11.15 S Euch, Missa aeterna (Palestrina), Lord not to us (Henderson), Canon Webster; 6 E, Howells in G, My beloved spake (Hadley).

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP; 8 Communion; 10.30 Euch, Byrd a 4, Mach's mit mir gott (Bach), Ave verum corpus (Byrd), Rev K Leech; 3 German Lutherans; 5 E, Responses (Rose), Stanford in G, Save us O Lord (Bairstow).

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC, The Dean; 10.30 S Euch, Messe solennelle (Langlais), The Precentor; 3.45 E, Preces (Shephard), Nunc Dimittis (Wood in G), Te lucis ante terminum (Strategier).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Schubert in G, Ven R Ellis; 11.15 M, Responses (Aylewad), Beati quorum via (Stanford), The Dean; 3 E, Responses (Leighton), St Paul's Service (Howells), Christus factus est (Bruckner); 6.30 E, The strife is o'er (Ley), Preb P Avis.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Missa brevis (Mozart), Ave verum (Mozart), The Precentor; 11.30 M, Darke in E, Sing joyfully (Byrd); 3.30 E, Kelly in C, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford), The Archdeacon of Hereford.

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 S Euch, Johannesburg Service (Bertalot), Love is come again (arr Paterson), Archdeacon of Loughborough; 2.30 Wedding; 4 Choral E, Lang in E flat, Let God arise (Locke), The Treasurer.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Darke in F, Jubilate in B flat (Stanford), Regina caeli (Soriano), Rev D Morris; 3.30 E, Sumsion in A, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford).

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 MP; 10.30 Euch, Canon N Vincent; 3 Choral E, Canon M Boyling; 4 HC.

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M & Litany; 8 Holy Euch, Rev M Tomlinson; 9 Parish Euch, Rev M Tomlinson; 11 S Euch, Messe Basse (Fauré), Gloria & Creed (Shaw), The lord is my shepherd (Greene), Ven R Roberts; 12.15 Holy Euch; 4 Service of Restoration.

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 9 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Canon A Radcliffe; 6.30 E, Awake thou wintry earth (Bach), Canon J Atherton.

NEWPORT CATHEDRAL: 10.30 M, Te Deum (Gray in A), Now the God of peace (Knight); 6.30 E, O be joyful (Stanford), Postlude in G minor (Stanford).

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.15 Family Communion; 10.30 S Euch, Missa Aedis Christi (Matthias), Love is come again (Benson), The Dean; 3.30 E, Responses (Rose), The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford), The Archdeacon of Sudbury; 6.30 Healing & Reconciliation, Rev A Little.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 9.30 M, Te Deum in G (Vaughan Williams), Jubilate (Shephard); 10.30 Euch, The Peterborough Service (Kelly), The Precentor; 3.30 E, Aston in F, As the apple tree (Walker).

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Parish C, Mass of St Thomas (Thorne), The Provost; 11 S Euch, Jesus Christ is risen (arr Wood), How in D, My eyes for beauty pine (Howells), The Provost; 6.30 Parish E, Rev M MacIvar.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch, The Dean; 9.30 Parish Euch, Darke in F, The Lamb (Tavener), Rev D Murfet; 11.30 M, Te Deum, Collegium Regale (Howells), Worthy is the Lamb (Handel); 12.30 Euch, Rev J Thorn; 3 Holy Baptism; 5.30 E, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, Short Service (Byrd), Lo the full final sacrifice (Finzi), Canon K Punshon.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M, Te Deum (Boyce in A), This joyful Eastertide (arr Harris); 10.30 S Euch, Missa Papae Marcelli (Palestrina), Canon M Bourdeaux; 3.15 E, Ives in D, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford).

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Euch, Canon J Sinclair; 6.30 Festal E & Sermon, Ven S Lowe.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.30 M & Litany; 8 HC; 9.30 Parish C, The Vicar Choral; 11 S Euch, Stanford in B flat, St Paul's Service (Howells); 3.15 E, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford).

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 S Euch, Jackson in G, Jesu joy of man's desiring (Bach), The Treasurer; 6 E, Dyson in D, Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford), Canon P Tidmarsh.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon R Capper; 9.15 Parish C, Brother James's Air (arr Jacobs), The Provost; 11 Solemn Euch, Mass (Monteverdi), We praise thee (Purcell), This joyful Eastertide (arr. Wood), Canon R Capper; 6.30 E, Fourth Service (Batten), Canon I Knox.

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Stanford in C/F, Verily Verily (Tallis), Ref G Farran; 11.30 M, Stanford in B flat, Praise the Lord ye servants (Blow); 3 E, Walmisley in B flat, Locus iste (Bruckner), Preb J Ruffle.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M, Responses (Tallis), Westminster Service (Clucas), Haec est dies (Handl), Rev D Rhodes; 11.15 Euch, Gloria Angus Dei (Power), Christ our paschal Lamb (Sheppard), Canon A Harvey; 3 E, Christ rising (Byrd), Canon A Harvey; 5.45 Recital; 6.30 Evening, Rev Dr P Bradshaw.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 M, Jubilate in C (Stanford), Haec dies (Byrd), The Bishop of Southampton; 11.30 Euch, When thou O Lord hadst arisen (Rachmaninov), Ven A Knight; 3.30 E, Blair in D minor, Love bade me welcome (Vaughan Williams).

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch, Mass in four parts (Byrd), Rev L Stanbridge; 11.30 M, Short Service (Weelkes); 4 E, Short Service (Byrd), When the Lord turned again (Batten), Rev Prof E Norman.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Choral M, Responses (Rose), The strife is o'er (Ley), Very Rev K Goulstone; 3.30 EP.

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon M Shaw; 10 S Euch, Rev R Davey, Canon M Shaw, Sanderstead Service (How), Jackson in G, Bread of the world, Ave verum (Elgar); 11.30 HC, Canon M Mingins; 3.30 Choral E, This joyful Eastertide (Wood), Responses (Leighton), Wood in E flat, Let all the world (Leighton).

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 Morning HC, The Minister; 10 Morning HC, Four Part Mass (Byrd); 11.30 Morning, Justorum animae (Stanford), The Minister; 6 St Giles at Six, Recital; 8 Evening, Rev C Kenny.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 10.30 Euch, Harris in F, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (Elgar), The Precentor; 3.30 Choral E, Wood in E flat No. 2, This joyful Eastertide (arr Wood).

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Missa bell' amfitrit' altera (Lassus), Altissime (Plainsong), Regina coeli (Morales), Canon J Halliburton; 3.15 E, Westminster Serv (Howells), Angelus Domini (Casciolini), Rev I Bailey; 5 Recital, D King.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy. Kievan and traditional polyphony.

ALL SAINTS, Margaret Street, W1: 8, 5.15 LM; 10.20 MP; 11 HM, Stanford in C, The Vicar; 6 E&B, Wesley in E, The Vicar.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, W1: 9 Com; 11 Preb R Bewes; 6.30 Rev Dr J Stott.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, W1: 11 Mass for four voices (Byrd), Jesus junxit se (Palestrina), Sicut cervus (Palestrina).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children; 11 M, The Heavens are telling (Haydn), Rev Dr. P Elvy; 12.15 HC; 6 E, Rev D Bean.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH, Curzon St, W1: 11 Sunday School.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Covent Garden, WC2: 11.15 Rev S Hood; 6.30 Rev J McMahon.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 ASB HC, Rev S Millar; 11 Morning, Rev S Millar; 5, 7 Informal, Mr K Costa.

THE ORATORY, Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, 12.30, 4.30, 7; 3.30 V & B.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH: Iverna Gdns, W8: 2nd Anniversary of the Enthronement of His Holiness Karekin I, Supreme Patriarch & Catholicos of All Armenians.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, City Road, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 Morning, Rev Dr L Griffiths; 12.30 Church Meeting.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SW1: 11 Rev Dr P Graves; 6.30 Rev E Fletcher.

ST ANNE AND ST AGNES (Lutheran), Gresham St, EC2: 11 Choral Euch, Rev P Schmiege; 7 Lutheran Choral Vespers, Rev P Schmiege.

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, Smithfield, EC1: 11 M, Responses (Tomkins), Te Deum & Jubilate (Noble in B minor), Ye choirs of new Jerusalem (Stanford); 6.30 Sung Euch, Missa Sancti Johannes de Deo (Haydn).

ST BRIDE'S, Fleet Street, EC4: 11 Choral M & Euch, Jubilate (Ireland in F), Missa brevis (Palestrina), Victimae paschali (Willaert), Canon J Oates; 6.30 Choral E, Responses (Tomkins), Magnificat/Nunc Dimittis (Purcell in G minor), My shepherd is the living Lord (Tomkins), Surrexit pastor bonus (L héritier), Canon J Oates.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Ch Euch, Missa Brevis in C (Mozart), Salvator mundi (Tallis), Rev R Lee.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, SW1: 11 Rev D Gay; 6.30 Rev C MacLeod.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, Ely Place: 11 S Mass, Messe basse (Fauré), Haec dies (Mawby), Dulcis Christe (Grancini).

ST GEORGE'S, Hanover Square, W1: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Missa brevis in F (Haydn), The Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 Good Shepherd Sunday, S Euch, St James's Choir, John Paul, Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rev M Robin; 5.45 EP.

ST JOHN'S, Stratford E15: 11 Family, Nun Danket (Karg-Elert), Rev J Richardson; 6.30 HC, Rev M Okello.

ST LUKE'S, Chelsea, SW3: 8 HC; 10.30 MP & HC, Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Weelkes), Rev L Matabula; 6.30 E, Alma redemptoris mater (Guerrero), Rev C Kevill-Davies.

ST MARK'S, Regents Park Rd, NW1: 8 HC; 9.45 Family Communion; 11 S Euch, Jackson in G, Magdalen cease from sobs and sighs (Hurford), Rev D Bean.

ST MARGARET'S, Westminster, SW1: 11 S Euch, Missa brevis sanctae Margaritae (Gutteridge), The whole bright world rejoices now (Anon), Rev P Cowell.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch, The Vicar; 11.30 Visitors, Rev A Hurst; 2.45 Chinese, The Vicar; 5 Choral E; 6.30 Evening.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington W8: 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 Parish Euch, Rev F Gelli; 11.15 Choral M, The Vicar; 6.30 E, Miss L Buxton.

ST MARY'S, Bourne Street, SW1: 9, 10, 7 LM; 11 HM, Missa St Johannis de Deo (Haydn), Canon L Pilkington; 6 Solemn E & B.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, Primrose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Parish Euch, Parish AGM; 6 EP, Prayer & Meditation.

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, W1: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Miss in G (Schubert), The Rector.

ST PETER'S, Eaton Square, SW1: 8.15 HC; 10 Family Euch; 11 S Euch, Miss sine nomine (Hassler), Da Israel aus Aegypten zog (Mendelssohn), Fr D Tillyer.

ST SIMON ZELOTES, Milner St, SW3: 8 HC; 11 M, Te Deum (Stanford in B flat), Christ is risen (Joubert), Preb M McGowan; 6.30 E.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC, Rev P Abram; 11 M & Sermon, Benedictus (Tallis), Plainsong, Christ rising again (Byrd), Rev P Abram.

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Rise heart thy Lord is risen (Vaughan Williams), Rev R Clarke.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley Street, W1: 8.15 HC; 11 S Euch, Missa O Quam Gloriosum (Victoria), Rev S Hobbs.

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 M, Te Deum (Gibbons), Let all the world (Vaughan Williams), The Chaplain; 12.30 HC.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Te Deum laudamus (Sumsion in G), Jubilate Deo (Moeran in E flat), The Lord is my shepherd (Stanford), The Master.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 M, This joyful Eastertide (arr. Wood), The day draws on (Bairstow), Band of the Blues & Royals, Rev L Bryan; 12 HC.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SE10: 4.30 Choral E, Noble in B minor, Rev C French.

Anniversaries

TODAY

BIRTHS: Giuseppe Tartini, composer, Istria, 1692; John George Lambton, 1st Earl of Durham, statesman, London, 1792.

DEATHS: Boris Godunov, Tsar of Russia 1598-1605, Moscow, 1605; Feodor Chaliapin, bass singer and actor, Paris, 1938; Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd American President 1933-45, Warm Springs, Georgia, 1945; Joe Louis, the "Brown Bomber", world heavyweight boxing champion 1937-48, Las Vegas, 1981; Alan Stewart Paton, writer, Durban, 1988; Sugar Ray Robinson, boxer, Culver City, California, 1989.

The American Civil War began with the siege of Fort Sumter, South Carolina, 1861.

TOMORROW

BIRTHS: Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, statesman, London, 1593; Frederick North, 2nd Earl of Guilford, Prime Minister 1770-82, London, 1732; Thomas Jefferson, 3rd American President 1809-09, Shadwell, Virginia, 1743; Richard Trevithick, pioneer of railways, Illogan, Cornwall, 1771; Sir Arthur Harris, Marshal of the RAF, Cheltenham, 1892.

DEATHS: Jean de La Fontaine, poet, Paris, 1695; Charles Leslie, controversialist, Glaslough, Ireland, 1722; Sir William Orchardson, painter, London, 1910.

The Royal Military Academy was established at Woolwich, 1741.

The Catholic Emancipation Act was passed, 1829.

The Anti-Semitic League was founded in Prussia, 1882.

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FAX: 0171 481 9313

I shall search for the lost, recover the straggler, bandage the injured, strengthen the sick, leave the healthy and strong to play, and give my flock their proper food.
Ezekiel 34 : 16

BIRTHS

ABSE - See Morabito.

DEATHS

The Board of Directors, the Management and the Staff of Republic National Bank of New York are sad to announce the passing of

MRS EVELYNE NASSER

sister of their Honorary Chairman,

MR EDMOND J.SAFRA

BIRTHS

ASHPOLE - On April 3rd, to Emma and Richard, a son, William Egbert.

DAVIES - On February 23rd in Hereford, to Robert and Ruth, a son, George Daniel Moon.

DUDLEY - On April 5th 1997, to Carmen (née Jessurun) and Michael, a son, William Robert Thornton, a brother for Alexandra and Natasha.

DUNCAN - On March 28th 1997, to Caroline Mitchell-Heggs and Andrew, a daughter, Iona Judy Alexandra, a sister for Jennifer.

ELKERTON - On 4th April 1997 at The Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, to Sally (née Green) and Tim, a beautiful baby daughter, Fleur Elizabeth Diana.

EPSTEIN - On April 8th 1997 at The Portland Hospital, to Beth and Daniel - a little princess Ruthie.

HORN - On April 10th 1997 at The Portland Hospital, to Victoria and Charles, a daughter, Olivia Alexandra and a son, Edward Charles Digby.

HUBBARD - On Thursday 10th April at Maidstone, to Susan (née Craggs) and Gary, a daughter, Rebecca Jane, 8lbs 12oz. Best wishes to all three from T C & J.

ISANLAR - On April 7th at The Portland Hospital, to Meltem and Levend, a lovely daughter, Deniz.

LALLY - Helen (née Mathews) and Frank are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Rebecca Elizabeth on Friday 11th April 1997.

McCONNELL - On April 3rd 1997 at The Portland Hospital, to Dawn and Peter, a son, Benedict Mark Thomas, our wonderful blessing.

MORABITO - On 9th April 1997, to Bathsheba (née Abse) and Giuseppe, a daughter, Allegra.

ROWELL - On 9th April 1997, to Anne (née van den Berg), wife of Christopher, a son, Edward Martin, a brother for Constance and Esther.

STONE - On April 1st in Oxford, to Judith (née Neale) and Richard, a daughter, Philippa Mary, a sister for Caroline.

TSUNODA - On April 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Tomo (née Kaneko) and Takeshi, a lovely daughter, Mai.

TYSOE - On April 3rd, to Emma (née Battman) and John, a son, Henry George, a brother for Olivia and Barnaby.

WILLIAMS - On 10th April, to Tina (née Charlton) and Shon, a daughter, Emma Margot, a sister for Owen.

RUBY ANNIVERSARIES

FAIRCLOUGH:WILSON - Donald to Lillias on 13th April 1957.

WILLIAMS - Bill and Coral 13th April 1957, with love and thanks Janis, Steven, Ann, Michael and Sonja, grandchildren Victoria, David, Charlotte and Joshua.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

BICKERSTETH:CAMERON - On 12th April 1947 at All Saints Wisley, Surrey, Edward Jeff Bickersteth, Sudan Political Service, to Elspeth Cameron. Now at Pewsey, SN9 5DW.

RAE SMITH:WATSON - On 12th April 1947 at St Augustine's Church, Hedon, East Yorks, David Douglas Rae Smith and Margaret Alison (Johnny) Watson.

DEATHS

BLAND - Robert Dennis Fraser (Dennis) peacefully at Yolanta House Retirement Home on 10th April, loved father of the late Jane, dear brother of Donald and Shirley. Funeral Service at Wilford Hill Crematorium at 1.45 pm Wednesday 16th April. Family flowers only please to Baguley Brothers, 500 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG5 2FR.

de CORDOVA - Gillian peacefully at home on 10th April. Much loved wife of John and mother of Sheila, Tessa and Isabel. Cremation private. Thanksgiving Service at St Peter's Church, Kington Langley, on Friday 18th April at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Donations to Dorothy House Foundation, Bradford-on-Avon, BA15 2LE.

DEATHS

DEIGHTON-GIBSON - On April 10th, Ian Deighton-Gibson MA DL, died peacefully at home after a long illness. Dearly loved husband of Barbara, father of Janet, Helen, Shenagh, Penelope and Alistair and Grandfather to seven. Private Family Service on Wednesday 16th April followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at 2.30 pm at St Andrews Church, Tiverton. Family flowers only please and donations to St Andrews Church or Marie Curie, Tidcombe Hall, Tiverton. Enquiries to Walter H Squire & Son, Wellbrook Street, Tiverton, (01884) 253021.

FREEBORN - James Pierre on 9th April 1997 at St Andrews Memorial Hospital passed away peacefully after a long and courageous struggle, dearest husband of Mary and loving father of Alexandra and Peter. Service of Thanksgiving will be held at Hope Park Church, St Andrews, on Tuesday April 15th at 2 pm, following a cremation service in Dundee Crematorium. Family flowers only.

GIBSON - Alan, on April 10th, peacefully at Taunton, aged 73. Funeral Service at Taunton Baptist Church, Silver Street, Friday April 18th, 1.45 pm, all welcome. The President of the Immortals has ended his sport.

KENNEDY - Alan Henry, TD, FRICS, died peacefully in hospital on April 10th 1997, beloved husband of Wendy and much loved father of Nigel, Ian and Penny, father-in-law of Adrienne and Sarah and grandfather of Annabel. A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at Noss Mayo Church, Devon, on Thursday April 17th at 2.15 pm. Donations if desired for the Oncology Unit at Freedom Fields Hospital may be sent to Walter C Parson, 2 Market Road, Plympton, Plymouth PL7 1QW, tel: (01752) 343848.

OCKLESTON - On Tuesday April 8th peacefully in hospital, Tommy, beloved husband of the late Betty and father of Peter. Service of Thanksgiving on Wednesday April 16th at St Mary the Virgin Church, Bruera, near Chester, at 12 noon. No flowers or letters, donations to Bruera Church.

ORAM - On 11th April, John Albert James (Jock), aged 81 years of Enfield. Dearly loved father, father-in-law and grandfather and great friend to all who knew him. Funeral Service at Chipping Warden Parish Church near Banbury on Saturday, 19th April at 11.30 am. Family flowers only, donations if desired for RNLI and Old Ben c/o J&M Humphris, 32 Albert Street, Banbury OX16 8DG.

RADFORD - On April 7th 1997 at home John Edward Dicey aged 81. Much loved husband of Barbara, father of Joy, Ian, Jennifer and Alan and grandfather of Lucy, Andrew, Daniel, Edward, William and Jessica. Service at Exeter Crematorium on Tuesday 15th April at 1.45pm. No flowers but donations to The National Trust.

REYNA - Yolanda tragically on 1st March 1997. Funeral took place at St Mary's Church, Clapham, London. A wonderful life that brought love and happiness to many and will always be remembered with much love by Belinda, Humberto, Simon, Michael, her relatives from Venezuela and her many friends.

SALINGER - Beloved Major William Arthur Salinger, retired US Air Force, died peacefully on Friday 4th April 1997, aged 78. He will be fondly remembered for his charm, wit and sense of style by all his family.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

BIRCHETT - In loving memory of Stephen who died 13th April 1994 aged 38.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

ROBERTS - Gwendolen, died 2nd September 1996, and Neville Wyn, died 27th November 1974. Much loved parents of Ann, Jane and Derek, and loving grandparents of Tim, Robin, Sarah, Hazel, Anna and Katie. Remembered today on the 56th anniversary of their wedding.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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THEUNISSEN - Elisabeth Theresia Maria, born in the Netherlands 11-6-1951. Please contact our Notary-office van Gasthorst en van Buisonnen situated in Utrecht (the Netherlands), if you know where she is or can be reached, she is heiress of an estate. Tel: 0031 30 2719227/ Fax: 00 31 30 2719344

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OBITUARIES

HENRY HYDE

Henry Hyde, American wartime spymaster, died in New York on April 5 aged 81. He was born in Paris on October 31, 1915.

A New York lawyer descended from the founder of the Equitable Life Insurance Company, Henry Hyde has his place in military history as the organiser of the "Penny Farthing" spy network which made such a contribution to the success of the Allied landings in the South of France. His birth in Paris to American parents whose social circle touched espionage, fashion, art and the military world, was of inestimable advantage when, in 1942, he was recruited by Allen Dulles for the Office of Strategic Services (forerunner of the CIA) to organise the Allied espionage penetration of southern France. The result was the establishment of an unusual intelligence network which embraced both French aristocrats and anarchists, as well as many shades of political opinion in between.

It was to provide detailed information on German troop movements in southern France which was of invaluable help to the US Seventh Army in its advance from the French Riviera up the Rhône valley in the summer of 1944. Penny Farthing intelligence also gave material assistance to the D-Day landings by locating the *Das Reich* division before it was able to move northwards to join in the battle for the Normandy beachhead. Hyde's exploits are recorded in Joseph Persico's book *Piercing the Third Reich* and in *Wild Bill Donovan* by Anthony Cave Brown.

Born in Paris, Henry Baldwin Hyde grew up in Versailles. His father, James Hazen Hyde, was an ardent Francophile who spent more than forty years in France and seldom returned to the US. At his home he entertained a large and glittering circle which included the Allied Commander in Chief, Marshal Foch. Hyde's mother, Marthe Leishman, ran a salon which was frequented at various times by Ravel, Cole Porter, the painter Marie Laurencin and the society beauty Misia Sert (herself the wife of the Spanish painter José-Maria Sert).

Hyde was educated in France, England and Germany and became fluent in French and German. In France he attended the Collège de Normandie and then went to Chillon College in Switzerland. In England he was educated at Charterhouse before going to Trinity College, Cambridge, to read history. He then went for a period to Bonn University before returning to America to study at Harvard Law School. But he arrived back in America having developed, from his continental education, what Anthony Cave Brown has described as "a Cartesian mind that was rare in American society." He was already a natural candidate for the OSS role he was later to fulfil.

He was in practice in the law in New York when he was recruited into the OSS by Allen Dulles, himself a lawyer. Hyde was sent to Algiers where, after a period doing routine desk work he became responsible for collecting intelligence about the movement of German forces in southern France, with an eye on the "Anvil" invasion which was to complement the Normandy landings (when it actually happened it was renamed, less impressively, "Dragoon"). He was told to recruit, brief and equip agents, to select dropping points and to co-ordinate communications between the spies and the OSS in Algiers. "Penny Farthing", as this operation became known, was always reckoned by the OSS to be its most successful wartime effort.

That it was so, was largely due to Hyde's knowledge of France and the French psychology and to his willingness to embrace unusual solutions to problems. Thus, his espionage team contained personalities as different as the Lyons nobleman Count Jacques de Rocquefort and the firebrand socialist anarchist Mario Marret (codename "Toto"). Between them these men led the Penny Farthing operation on the ground.

After bringing them to London and having them trained there, Hyde had them dropped into France from where they radioed information on German troop movements to the OSS's HQ in Algiers. In six months Hyde oversaw the expansion of the Penny Farthing network of radio stations from two to 20, to provide a quite remarkable flow of information to the Allies. Eventually, after transmitting more than 200 messages to Hyde in Algiers, Toto was captured by the Gestapo in Lyons and interrogated by the German security service (*Sicherheitsdienst*). He was to remain a captive of the SD in Fort Montluc — in the daily expectation of being shot — until the liberation of Lyons.

But by the time he was taken, the damage to German military prospects had been done. When the American Seventh Army and Free French forces went ashore at landing points between Cannes and Toulon on August 15, 1944, they were unusually well acquainted with the dispositions of their opponents and sustained incredibly light losses: 94,000 men and 11,000 vehicles were landed with fewer than 200 casualties. As a result of this Allied awareness, the defending German 19th Army received a severe mauling before it was able to extricate itself and retreat north. Thereafter, the advance was eased at every step by the flow of intelligence available to it, as well as by the harassing efforts of the French Resistance in the South (not to mention the fact that its victorious path lay through some of France's finest wine country). General Alexander Patch, who commanded the US Seventh Army, was later to congratulate the head of the OSS, Major-General Donovan, on the "extraordinary accuracy" of the intelligence that Penny Farthing had delivered to him.

Yet one of Penny Farthing's most signal intelligence feats bore not upon the Franco-American advance in the South but on the earlier Normandy battle. This was the discovery of the presence of the SS Panzer Division *Das Reich* in southwestern France when it was thought to be in action on the Russian front. The detection by a Penny Farthing agent of this very powerful unit in a position where it could be rushed northwards to menace the Allied breakout in Normandy was a great intelligence coup and gave Allied tactical air force and French guerrilla commanders time to prepare plans to disrupt its march when the time came for it to move. The upshot was that the Reich division was harried by air strikes and guerrilla ground attacks all the way from the Bordeaux area to Normandy, where it arrived far too late to affect the outcome.

At the end of the war Hyde was awarded the Croix de Guerre and made an officer of the Legion of Honour by a grateful French Government, while the US Government awarded him two Bronze Stars. After VE-Day, Hyde replaced Dulles as OSS chief in Switzerland, remaining in the post for two years before returning to the US where he practised international law for two leading New York law firms until his retirement in 1990. Aside from his professional work, he was a president of the Veterans of the OSS and was also a vice-president of the French Institute/Alliance Française. In the latter capacity he was able to continue his work for better Franco-American understanding.

He is survived by his wife Liza, whom he married in 1961, by two daughters from a previous marriage to Marie de LaGrange, and by two stepdaughters.

LAURA NYRO

Laura Nyro, American singer and songwriter, died from cancer on April 8 aged 49. She was born on October 18, 1947.

THE boundaries of pop music were expanded a little and forever by the eccentric, late Sixties figure of Laura Nyro. A Bronx native, Nyro sang about tough, urban environments in a voice which could sweep from soft, whispery anguish to operatic bravura in a single phrase. "Gentle as a razor-blade" was how one critic described the disconcerting effect. In that women-dominated, introspective school of songwriting she was second only to Joni Mitchell and Carole King.

As a singer, her popularity never reached far beyond the Haight Ashbury hippies. But as a songwriter, she made stars of many of her contemporaries: *And When I Die* (recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary and Blood, Sweat and Tears); *Eli's Coming* (Three Dog Night); *Wedding Bell Blues* (the Fifth Dimension): and *Stoney End* (Barbra Streisand). *Stoned Soul Picnic* alone was recorded by 60 other artists, including Aretha Franklin and Frank Sinatra. Nyro, too, might have had hit singles had she been prepared to make slight cuts to her album tracks — to which she would never agree.

Unlike some contemporaries such as Janis Joplin she survived the temptations of exotic stimulants and got out in time to save her health and sanity. In 1972, after returning from a tour in Japan, she retired with her carpenter husband to a small fishing town in Massachusetts. The marriage did not last but the retirement did — bar the occasional new album and flurry of media interest.

Laura Nigro, as she was christened, was brought up in the musical melting pot of the Bronx, and influenced by her Spanish and black neighbours, her Italian father who tuned pianos for a living and played jazz trumpet, and her Jewish mother who worshipped Debussy. She wrote poems and songs from the age of eight in a prolific if undisciplined manner and at Manhattan's High School of Music and Art was given a solid grounding in piano and composition. At night she sang in subway stations with a neighbourhood harmony group.

Though her voice had been trained to sing opera, she never really got beyond a minority appeal as a singer; her main contribution was to be as a songwriter. Her best-known song, *And When I Die*, was recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary when she was only 17 (Blood, Sweat and Tears later also had a hit with it). By then Nyro was well-established as a folksinger, with her long skirts, her centre-parted black hair flowing down to her guitar, and her sloe-black eyes trained on the audience as she wailed through her compositions.

The success of *And When I Die* led to an invitation to appear at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. But, against the psychedelic atmosphere and the high voltage rock of Jimi Hendrix, Nyro seemed out of place. She had chosen to wear a grotesque black wedding dress and to stage a Motown-style revue, and she was booed off stage. Nyro, who always spooked easily, was so wounded that she avoided performing in public again for several years.

Her first album, *More than a New Discovery* (1966) showed off her sophistication as a songwriter. Her new manager David Geffen ensured her a free creative hand in the studios of her next recording company, Columbia Records for the second album. The result was *Eli and the Thirteenth Confession* (1968), an emotional account of a young woman growing up, which influenced a whole generation of women songwriters — not just her immediate contemporaries but women like Kate Bush, Rickie Lee Jones and Suzanne Vega. Three more albums followed, and her one brush with the pop charts — a version of the Drifters' *Up on the Roof* in 1970. The 1971 *Gonna Take a Miracle* album was a tribute to the old New York street standards of Motown and doo-wop.

Then came her early retirement, ended by the album *Smile* (1976) which she went on the road to promote. Now eight months pregnant and radiantly healthy, she seemed relaxed to be back on stage. She took six years off to bring up her son but was back on the touring circuit in the 1980s.

Nyro had found that only artists like Bob Dylan could withdraw so completely from their audience and then be accepted back entirely, no matter what musical direction they had decided to take in the interim. The loyal core of fans still turned out to see her Christmas Eve shows in downtown Manhattan and Columbia recently released a two-disc retrospective of her work. But she could no longer be called a pop diva, and immersed as she was in green issues and Eastern mysticism, she did not seem to miss the mixed blessings and burdens of that life.

Laura Nyro is survived by her son and by her companion, Maria, her marriage having ended in divorce after three years.

DR RICHARD ROBINSON

Dr Richard Robinson, gardener and horticultural photographer, died on March 27 aged 80. He was born on March 21, 1917.

THE garden that Richard Robinson created over a period of 38 years on an exposed hilltop at Hyde Hall, in Rettendon, is a Mecca for plantsmen. It is now one of three gardens owned by the Royal Horticultural Society, having been gifted to the society in 1993.

Richard Henry Martin Robinson trained first to be a doctor, but having qualified he turned from medicine to farming. He bought Hyde Hall in 1955 and began running the farm of nearly 1,800 acres. The garden started simply as an effort to clear up around the farmhouse and outbuildings.

The bleak site was an unlikely place to start, but Robinson planted trees and shelter belts to protect the land. Trees and shrubs from mild climates such as California now thrive there. Robinson treated the alkaline soil with aluminium sulphate in woodland areas to make it suitable for lime-hating rhododendrons and other *Ericaceae*.

Hyde Hall is now renowned for its comprehensive collection of plants. Robinson was constantly updating his garden. He had a network of horticultural friends with whom he exchanged plants. He built up the national collections of *Malus* (ornamental crab apples) and *Viburnum*, and a magnificent collection of roses.

Robinson always maintained that his garden merely evolved rather than being carefully planned on graph paper. But this is not the impression it created. The grounds at Hyde Hall are more like a charming series of smaller gardens, than one large one. There is a long herbaceous border with the plants arranged in colour groups. At another turn one is confronted, in May and early June, by a rainbow of irises in what is probably the longest iris border to be seen anywhere. Another unique feature is a large colony of foxtail lilies (*Eremurus*) naturalised among shrub roses, their spires of flowers rising above the rose blooms.

Robinson was also, for many years, the official photographer to the Royal Horticultural Society and a familiar figure at its Westminster flower shows where he photographed the plants that had received awards.

He was custodian of the Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection originally based at Hyde Hall but recently relocated to Wickford near by. This collection of garden and plant photographs is drawn upon by gardening publishers worldwide.

The Royal Horticultural Society awarded Robinson the Gold Veitch Memorial Medal in 1987 for his services to horticulture. The society's honorary fellowship was conferred on him in 1993.

He was twice married. He had two children by his first marriage, one of whom predeceased him. He is survived by his wife Helen.

ALAN GIBSON

Alan Gibson, writer and broadcaster, died at Taunton on April 10, aged 73. He was born at Sheffield on May 28, 1923.

AS A writer and broadcaster on many subjects, Alan Gibson had a touch that was all his own, informed by learning, generosity and humour. For many years he reported cricket for *The Times* — not so much the cricket itself as a day at the cricket and the problems of getting there, which seemed, as often as not, to entail changing at Didcot.

The only son of a miner who became a Baptist minister, Gibson was a Yorkshireman by birth and a West Countryman by long association and strong liberal convictions. He got an exhibition from Taunton School to Oxford, where he became President of the Union and took a First in History without attending a single lecture while in residence. He was of the opinion that the best way to get a good degree was by *reading* for it.

From Oxford he became a lecturer at Exeter University before moving on to the BBC in Bristol, where he soon made an impact with his literacy and ingeniousness. He was a Dissenting preacher of the old school and in 1959 stood for Parliament as the Liberal candidate for Falmouth/Camborne. He and Derek Jones launched *Good Morning*, a cheerful, bantering breakfast time radio programme, which came from Bristol and Plymouth and was, in a sense, a pioneering one.

He introduced *Sunday Half Hour*, was regularly on *Christian Forum*, became a pillar of *Round Britain Quiz* and by the early 1960s was commentating on Test matches and rugby internationals (except when the South Africans were in England in 1969-70, when his abhorrence of apartheid prompted him to stand down.)

He was at the microphone during the closing overs of the famous Test match against West Indies at Lord's in 1963 when, with an over to go, all four results were still possible. When the commentary team at a Test match consisted of E. W. Swanton as summariser, John Arlott and Gibson, with Brian Johnston providing the merriment, it was the best and most urbane it has ever been. It was the BBC's loss when Gibson was not allowed the same ground rules as Arlott when it came to required stimulation.

Although Gibson saw himself as a broadcaster first and a journalist second, Arlott described him as "quite the most amusing sportswriter of his time". He needed a long-suffering sports editor and was reluctant to come to terms with anything in the way of modern technology; he was not interested in "quotes" or minor records, but he was a delightful daily essayist and brilliant at picking something out from the periphery of a day's play and returning to it until it became a part of his readers' world.

Gibson wrote several books, including an autobiography, *A Mingled Yarn* (1976). His last four years were spent in a nursing home in Taunton.

As well as for *The Times* he contributed to *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Spectator* and *The Cricketer*.

He is survived by the two sons of his first marriage, to Olwen Thomas in 1948, and the son and daughter of his second to Rosemary King, in 1966. Both marriages were dissolved.

ON THIS DAY

April 12, 1886

Liszt's visit to London was sensational, not least because at the age of 75 he fulfilled a strenuous programme without showing any signs of mental fatigue.

LISZT CONCERTS

We have to record yet two more concerts given in honour of Liszt's visit to this country, consisting entirely of his works and witnessed from beginning to end by the indefatigable composer. The Liszt concert at the Crystal Palace on Saturday included two symphonic poems, *Les Préludes* and *Mazeppa*, and the 4th Hungarian Rhapsody, all played by the orchestra under Mr. Manns in such a manner as to evoke the warmest applause of the audience, in which the composer joined. At the same concert a young pianist, Herr Stavenhagen, one of Liszt's favourite pupils and his travelling companion, made his first appearance in the E flat concerto, which he played with sensational brilliancy of execution, and with a refinement of touch and intelligence of phrasing even more remarkable than his technical skill. The two Liszt concertos now under discussion, as, indeed, those previously given, did not introduce a single new work of importance. But the presence of the master was on each occasion sufficient to fill the hall to the last seat and to rouse the audience to an absolutely frantic pitch of enthusiasm. Ovations such as those offered to Liszt have never before been witnessed in musical England, and for the psychological student it was an interesting phenomenon to see quiet and decorous persons mounting on seats, waving hats and handkerchiefs, and clamouring with unrestrained lung power. Even outside the hall the composer's arrival was always waited for by crowds, who raised their hats to him as if he were a king, and the very cabmen on Saturday were fain to raise a cheer for the "Habby Liszt." These humble admirers have never heard a note of his music, and would probably not be very much the wiser were they to have that privilege. What impresses them, as with electric force, is the noble face and form and the bearing worthy of a leader of men, and denoting an overpowering personality; and this fact at the same time accounts to a great extent for the phenomenal and uninterrupted success of Liszt's career from his boyhood to his old age. [There follows a list of more than a dozen engagements — concerts, lectures, presentations, conversaziones, and an audience with the Queen — all in the course of one week.] A younger man might well have broken down under this weight of honour and excitement. But Liszt is prepared to brave the fatigues of a second week in London, and has accepted an invitation to be present on Saturday next at yet another concert at the Crystal Palace.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased person's whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified; after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

McMAHON MICHAEL JAMES late of 565 Oldfield Lane North, Greenford, Middx, who died on 17th January, 1997. Particulars to: Keith Hall, Juvlier & Co, 422 Greenford Road, Greenford, Middx. UB6 9AG before 13th June, 1997.

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
No. 11557 of 1996
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On 2 April 1997 the above-named Court made a Bankruptcy Order against the above-named debtor.
NOTE: All debts due to the estate should be paid to me.
Date 3 April 1997
Signed EBJ Mace
Official Receiver
Western Range
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THE TIMES TODAY

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

NEWS

Cabinet lets Eurosceptics off leash

■ Tory candidates wishing to defy the government line on the single currency were given Cabinet blessing as it emerged that parliamentary aides to the Foreign Secretary and party chairman had joined the lengthening list of those who have said Britain must keep the pound. William Hague, the Welsh Secretary, said that candidates were free to say what they liked about the euro .... Pages 1, 9-16, 23

Police praise courage of rape victim

■ An Austrian gang rape victim flew home to Vienna after British police and lawyers praised her composure while giving evidence at the Old Bailey of the attack in which she was also subjected to other sexual acts .... Page 1

Runners double up

There is an alternative to running the Flora London Marathon tomorrow. *It is to run a marathon ... in London ... sponsored by* Flora........................ Page 1

Firemen to strike

Essex firefighters voted to stage one-day strikes over a proposed £1.5 million budget cut ...... Page 2

IRA bomb plot

Large areas of southeast England would have faced long blackouts if an IRA plot to bomb power stations had succeeded, the Old Bailey was told .... Page 3

Student suicide

An outstanding Oxford University student was found hanged after seeking counselling for depression over her finals................ Page 4

Teachers face sack

Two teachers who went on strike rather than teach a boy with a record of classroom disruption face the sack .... Page 4

Masterpieces mislaid

Thousands of paintings whose whereabouts have long been unknown have been located in the Government Art Collection Page 5

Poverty of learning

A report by Roman Catholic bishops makes a direct link between poverty and poor exam results in school........................ Page 8

Iranian anger

Iran's President Rafsanjani denounced a Berlin court's verdict that Iranian leaders had ordered political murders carried out in Germany........................ Page 17

Censorship fears

Staff on the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong fear a censor is being taken on to curb criticism of China .... Page 18

Yeltsin sacks generals

President Yeltsin dismissed four of Russia's top military officers accused of corruption......... Page 19

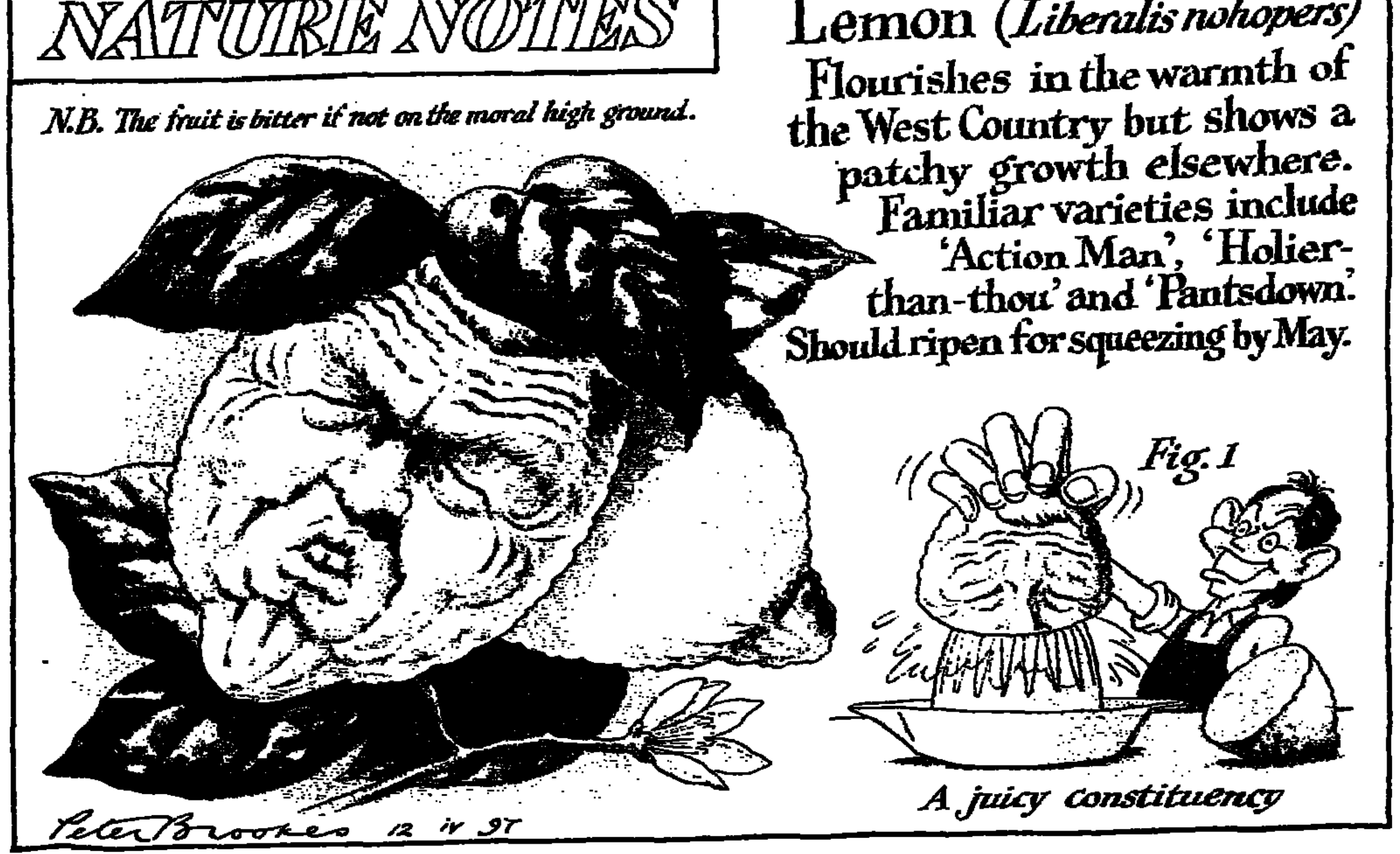
Scientist seeks a paper victory

■ The Oxford scientist Sir Roger Penrose has launched a legal action against Kleenex claiming that one of its lavatory papers features a mathematical jigsaw pattern that he designed 20 years ago. He is claiming copyright infringement .... Page 1

NATURE NOTES

N.B. The fruit is bitter if not on the moral high ground.

Lemon (*Liberalis nohopers*)
Flourishes in the warmth of the West Country but shows a patchy growth elsewhere. Familiar varieties include 'Action Man', 'Holier-than-thou' and 'Pantsdown'. Should ripen for squeezing by May.



OPINION

Wondrous things: The fundamental purpose of our presence in space has always *been as much what we would* find out about ourselves as what we would discover on distant planets .... Page 23

Labour tremors: The contrast between the Tories yesterday, brimming with bonhomie, and their strained and tetchy press conferences a week ago was stark .... Page 23

LETTERS

Blair and the unions; colour in *The Longest Day*; organ restoration .... Page 23

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Episcopal intervention in politics is like Rogantide or Lammas, a *harmless feast* without which England would not be England........................ Page 22

Philip Delves Broughton: To learn that real Italians are now rushing home to eat pre-*packaged, flavour-enhanced lasagne al forno* is like finding out that a model schoolmistress has taken to eating with her fingers .... Page 22

OBITUARIES

Henry Hyde, US spymaster; **Laura Nyro**, singer. **Page 25**

BUSINESS

WH Smith: The retailer and newsagent *struggling* to improve its high street chain's performance has parted company with the head of its retail division .... Page 27

Pay rise: Sir Clive Thompson, chief executive of Rentokil Initial, the sprawling cleaning and pest control group, was paid £1.23 million last year .... Page 27

Markets: The FT-SE 100 fell 42.5 points to close at 4270.7. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.3 to 99.7 after a rise from $1.6240 to $1.6255........................ Page 30

SPORT

Motor racing: Jacques Villeneuve was fastest in free practice for the Argentine Grand Prix. Only Rubens Barrichello was within a second of him........................ Page 51

Cricket: Scotland qualified for the 1999 World Cup with victory over Ireland in the ICC Trophy............... Page 52

Athletics: Weather permitting, this could be the best London Marathon of the decade........................ Page 47

CAR 97

Frank Warren shows off a 3½-tonne heavyweight Page 1

ARTS

Biters bit: "The revenge drama currently being enacted at the Battersea Arts Centre will surely make up in verbal barbs what it lacks in corpses" — Richard Morrison on critics vs directors............... Page 21

Leases on life: The City of London has long been a no-go area after 8pm with nothing open and nothing to do. Now it is coming alive...................... Page 21

Life of Bryan: Wembley Arena witnessed a triumphant display of Bryan Adams's power ... Page 21

SECTIONS

MAGAZINE

Shooting star: The rise of Gianfranco Zola.... Page 8
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Weekend

Small thought: Philosophy for children........ Pages 1,2

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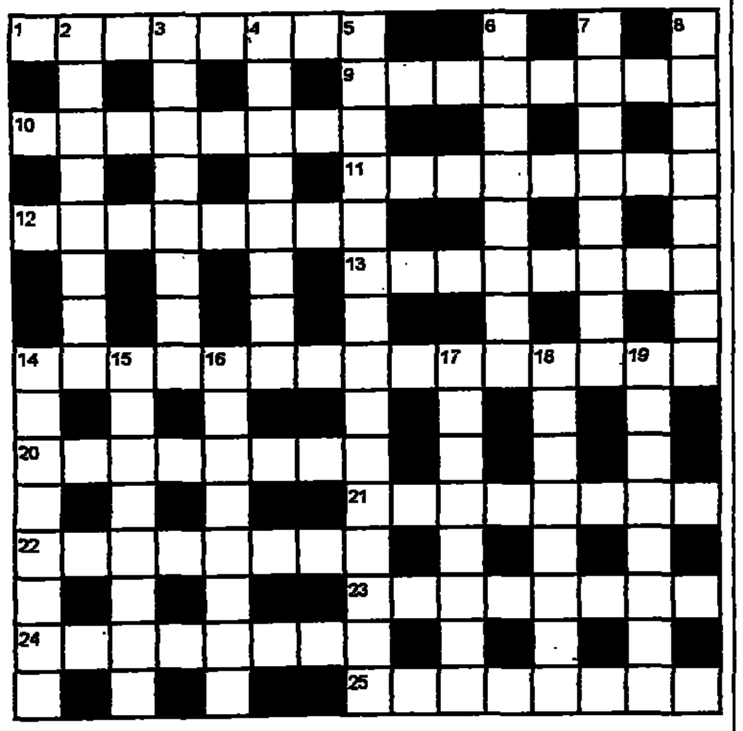
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,452

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address ....



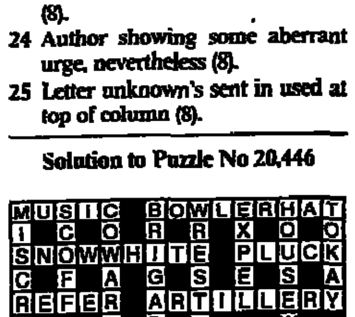
ACROSS

1 Officers are superior to buglers, for example (3,5).
9 Cruel, taking back one generous gesture? Not so (8).
10 Punish sailor taking fish caught by king (8).
11 Bed line 1 abandoned as unappealing to consumers (8).
12 Clock getting appropriate restoration (4-4).
13 Character? In a word, no (8).
14 Where to go for National Service? (6,2,7).
20 Getting seat, elected, adapt to new situation (6,2).
21 Rise gets one in credit, with added affluence (8).
22 Crawl out after explosion in scene of action (3,5).
23 Consumed more gas? Brilliant! (8).
24 Author showing some aberrant urge, nevertheless (8).
25 Letter unknown's sent in used at top of column (8).

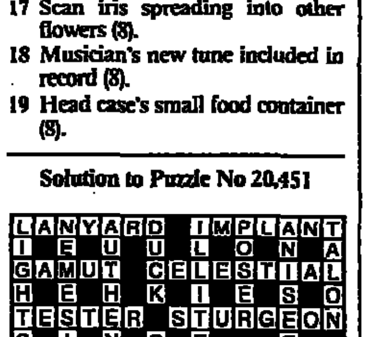
DOWN

2 Extra cunning needed for bridge? (8).
3 Contradict extremely limited adherent (8).
4 Add short length under a valve if absolutely necessary (2,1,5).
5 Error to stupidly commit, say (5,10).
6 Boy in prison finally getting air in cage, perhaps (8).
7 Number boy put on collections of plants (8).
8 Highly valued, final pair of antiques fell heavily (8).
14 Randomly decide how to allocate numerous parts (4,4).
15 Peacekeepers to fight many? That's perverse (8).
16 None retreat after killing in battle (8).
17 Scan iris spreading into other flowers (8).
18 Musician's new tune included in record (8).
19 Head case's small food container (8).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,446



Solution to Puzzle No 20,451



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: M Peyrebrune, Edinburgh; J E Tobin, Newcastle upon Tyne; S P J Stephenson, Shepton Mallet, Somerset; J R Gallimore, Stewkley, Bedfordshire; N Fisher, Bristol.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises: 6.12 am | Sun sets: 7.52 pm
Moon sets 12.36 am | Moon rises 9.43 am

First quarter April 14

London 7.52 pm to 6.09 am
Bristol 8.02 pm to 6.19 am
Edinburgh 8.13 pm to 6.13 am
Manchester 8.04 pm to 6.14 am
Penzance 8.12 pm to 6.33 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises: 6.09 am | Sun sets: 7.54 pm
Moon sets 1.29 am | Moon rises 10.35 am

First quarter tomorrow

London 7.54 pm to 6.07 am
Bristol 8.04 pm to 6.17 am
Edinburgh 8.15 pm to 6.10 am
Manchester 8.06 pm to 6.12 am
Penzance 8.13 pm to 6.31 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	*05.54*	*7.3*	*18.15*	*6.9*
Aberdeen	05.24	3.9	17.54	3.9
Avonmouth	11.20	12.3	23.31	11.9
Belfast	03.06	3.4	15.38	3.2
Cardiff	11.08	11.4	23.17	11.0
Devonport	10.00	5.1	22.13	5.0
Dover	02.52	6.5	15.17	6.3
Dublin (N Wall)	03.33	3.9	16.04	3.9
Falmouth	09.31	4.9	21.44	4.8
Greenock	04.19	3.4	16.49	3.2
Harwich	03.42	4.0	16.03	3.7
Holyhead	02.15	5.3	14.43	5.1
Hull (Albert D)	10.24	8.3	22.51	8.1
Ilfracombe	10.08	8.5	22.21	8.3
King's Lynn	10.25	6.1	22.52	5.8
Leith	06.48	5.2	19.18	5.1
Liverpool	03.05	9.0	15.30	8.8
Lowestoft	01.26	2.4	13.45	2.3
Margate	04.00	4.7	16.20	4.4
Milford Haven	10.24	6.4	22.41	6.2
Newquay	09.18	6.4	21.36	6.2
Oban	09.45	3.4	21.45	3.4
Penzance	08.43	5.1	21.03	5.0
Portland	10.57	1.7	23.06	1.7
Portsmouth	03.12	4.6	15.39	4.3
Shoreham	02.55	6.0	15.24	5.8
Southampton	02.41	4.4	15.03	4.2
Swansea	10.25	8.7	22.42	8.4
Tees	07.48	5.1	20.15	5.0
Walton-on-N	03.37	4.2	15.57	3.9

All times GMT Hights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Torquay, Devon, 19C (66F); lowest day max: Lerwick, Shetland, 7C (45F); highest rainfall: Aberdeen, 0.08in; highest sunshine: Torquay, 12.8hr.

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** in England and Wales, most places will have a dry bright day after a sharp overnight frost and, perhaps, some patchy mist. Sunny periods are expected, the best of the sunshine in the South and South West. Although still warm for the time of year, it will feel fresher.

For Scotland and Northern Ireland, northern Scotland will be cloudy with a little rain or drizzle. Other areas will be bright and dry with sunny periods.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England , NE England:** early frost clearing; bright or sunny periods, dry. Wind light, northerly. Cooler. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, Argyll:** frosty; bright or sunny intervals, dry. Wind light, northwest or variable. Warm. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **NE and NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** rather cloudy, some patchy drizzle. Winds light, westerly. Warm. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **N Ireland:** some early mist, then long sunny periods. Wind light and variable, coastal sea breezes. Warm. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **Outlook for tomorrow and Monday:** generally settled, dry and sunny. cloudier conditions are likely at times in the North and East.

AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

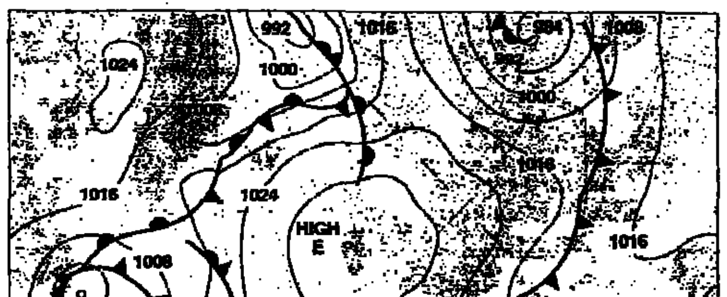
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	5.9	-	18	64	b	Margate	10.4	-	18	64	s
Anglesey	11.9	-	12	54	s	Minehead	X				
Aspatria	12.2	-	14	57	s	Morecambe	11.1	-	11	52	s
Aviemore	6.4	-	16	61	s	Newcastle	10.1	-	16	61	s
Belfast	5.7	-	13	55	b	Newquay	11.5	-	20	68	s
Birmingham	10.8	-	17	63	s	Norwich	9.8	-	18	64	s
Bognor R	12.0	-	19	66	s	Oxford	11.1	-	19	66	s
Bournem'th	11.9	-	19	66	s	Penzance	X	-	19	66	s
Bristol	11.7	-	21	70	s	Poole	9.5	-	X	X	s
Buxton	10.8	-	12	54	s	Prestatyn	X	-	12	54	s
Cardiff	11.8	-	18	64	s	Ross-o-wye	11.1	-	20	68	s
Clacton	12.1	-	14	57	s	Ryde	11.8	-	19	66	s
Colwyn Bay	11.3	-	11	52	s	Salcombe	12.2	-	20	68	s
Cromer	11.5	-	12	54	s	Sandown	11.8	-	17	63	s
Eastbourne	11.7	-	18	64	s	Saunton Snd	11.0	-	19	66	s
Edinburgh	10.5	-	17	63	s	Scarboro'	10.4	-	11	52	s
Eskdalemuir	11.2	-	16	61	s	Shanklin	11.8	-	X	X	s
Exmouth	11.5	-	17	63	s	Shrewsbury	10.8	-	14	57	s
Falmouth	11.7	-	16	61	s	Skegness	11.5	-	12	54	s
Folkestone	11.8	-	17	63	s	Southend	X	-	17	63	s
Guernsey	10.5	-	17	63	s	Southport	X				
Hastings	11.7	-	16	61	s	Southsea	10.3	-	16	61	s
Hayling I.	11.3	-	15	59	s	Stornoway	2.3	0.01	12	54	c
Herne Bay	10.0	-	19	66	s	Swanage	11.5	-	18	64	s
Hove	10.2	-	13	55	s	Teignmouth	11.1	-	17	63	s
Hunstanton	X	-	15	59	s	Tenby	12.4	-	17	63	s
Isle of Man	X					Tiree	4.9	0.01	12	54	c
Jersey	*12.1*	-	*21*	*70*	*s*	*Torquay*	*11.6*	-	*17*	*63*	s
Kinloss	5.6	-	15	59	s	Tynemouth	X	-	17	63	s
Leeds	11.0	-	17	63	s	Ventnor	11.8	-	17	63	s
Lerwick	0.3	0.11	9	48	r	West-s-mare	X				
Leuchars	10.2	-	17	63	s	Weymouth	12.3	-	17	63	s
Littlehmptn	11.3	-	18	64	s						
London	11.1	-	21	70	s						
Lowestoft	10.4	-	18	64	s						
Manchester	12.1	-	13	55	s						

These are Thursday's figures

ABROAD

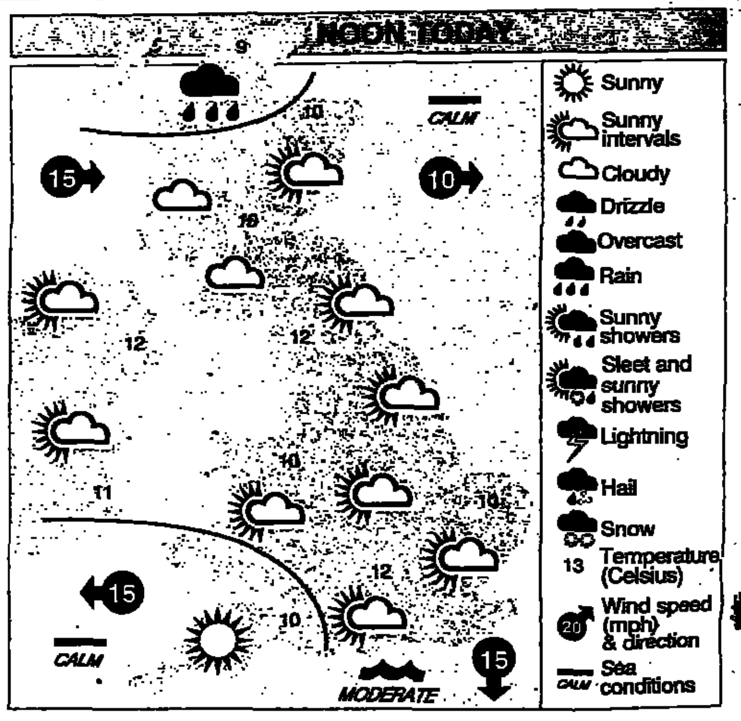
Ajaccio	17	63	s	Corfu	14	57	f	Madrid	15	59	c	Riyadh	24	75	s
Akrotiri	12	54	s	C'phagn	8	46	r	Majorca	18	64	f	Rome	16	61	s
Alex'dria	15	59	f	Dublin	12	54	s	Malaga	19	66	f	S Fr'isco	14	57	s
Algiers	17	63	c	Dubrovnik	13	55	s	Malta	14	57	f	Salzburg	16	61	s
Amst'dm	15	59	s	Faro	21	70	s	Melb'rne	15	59	c	Santiago	30	86	s
Athens	13	55	s	Florence	17	63	s	Mexico C	15	59	s	Seoul	15	59	s
B Aires	25	77	f	Frankfurt	18	64	s	Miami	22	72	f	Sing'por	27	81	f
Bahrain	22	72	s	*Funchal*	*20*	*68*	*c*	*Milan*	*20*	*68*	*s*	*St'kholm*	7	45	c
Bangkok	34	93	f	Geneva	18	64	s	Montreal	1	34	s	Strasb'rg	19	66	s
Barbados	29	84	s	Gibraltar	17	63	f	Moscow	3	37	s	Sydney	21	70	f
Barcelona	16	61	f	Helsinki	7	45	s	Munich	16	61	s	Tangier	20	68	c
Beirut	8	46	f	Hong K	20	68	r	N Delhi	29	84	s	Tel Aviv	11	52	c
Belgrade	15	59	s	Innsbrck	18	64	f	N York	X			Tenerife	22	72	s
Berlin	11	52	f	Istanbul	7	45	f	Nairobi	25	77	t	Tokyo	18	64	s
Bermuda	16	61	f	Jeddah	28	82	s	Naples	17	63	s	Toronto	4	39	s
Biarritz	19	66	s	Jo'burg	16	61	f	Nice	15	59	s	Tunis	13	55	f
Borde'x	20	68	s	Karachi	X			Oslo	14	57	f	Valencia	13	55	c
Brussels	16	61	s	L Angels	16	61	s	Paris	20	68	s	Vanc'ver	12	54	s
Budapest	15	59	f	L Palmas	21	70	f	Peking	22	72	s	Venice	15	59	s
Cairo	17	63	s	Le Touquet	15	59	f	Perth	26	79	s	Vienna	17	63	f
Cape Tn	32	90	s	Lisbon	17	63	c	Prague	12	54	c	Warsaw	11	52	c
Ch'church	15	59	x	Locarno	17	63	s	Reykjavik	5	41	f	Wash'ton	7	45	s
Chicago	X			Luxembg	18	64	s	Rhodes	10	50	s	Wel'ngton	17	63	x
Cologne	16	61	s	Luxor	24	75	s	Rio de J	25	77	f	Zurich	17	63	s

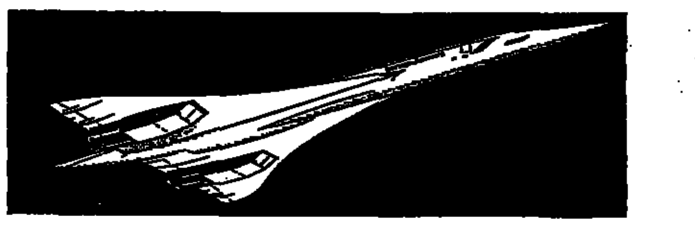
Temperatures at midday local time on Thursday. X = not available



Changes to the chart from noon: low T drifts towards Greenland and fills; high E continues to dominate British weather, with little movement or change in intensity for days to come

NOON TODAY





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THE TIMES 2

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THE HIDDEN ASSETS AT NATWEST
PAGE 29

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

Merrett ordered to repay £600,000

By Gavin Lumsden

MERRETT Holdings has been ordered by the Pensions ombudsman to repay £600,000 that it unlawfully removed from its pension scheme.

The ruling by Dr Julian Farrand, the ombudsman, is another major blow for Stephen Merrett, the former deputy chairman of Lloyd's of London. In January he was forced to pay £1 million in damages to names who suffered losses, and was barred from the insurance market.

Dr Farrand has ordered Merrett Holdings to repay £600,000 of surplus assets it took from one of its company pension schemes five years ago. Mr Merrett said he would appeal but if the decision was upheld it would force him to reclaim the money from his former syndicates to whom it was refunded in 1993. This could bring him into conflict with members of the 1,900-strong Merrett Syndicate 418 Names' Association, who battled for compensation for years after it lost £284 million.

As part of the January settlement, which protects him from further legal action, Mr Merrett paid £1 million to the action group and agreed never to work in the market again. Merrett underwriting agencies also promised to pay about £2.2 million to Lloyd's.

Mr Merrett resigned as deputy chairman of Lloyd's in September 1993 as fury at names' losses grew. Two years later, in a High Court case, he was accused of "negligence, incompetence and dereliction of duty".

In his judgment Dr Farrand upheld a complaint by John Bird, a pensioner, and Keith Hulme, the scheme's third trustee, that the trustees had been in breach of trust when they authorised the repayment of contributions back to the company.

In October 1992 the company stopped paying contributions into the Merrett Syndicates Ltd Retirement Benefits Scheme when Abbey National Independent Trustees, the scheme's second trustee and administrator, disclosed that it had a £3.28 million surplus.

At the end of April 1993 it obtained the trustees' agreement for a retrospective one-year contributions holiday. This money was returned to the syndicates who had provided money for the schemes on behalf of Merrett employees working on their behalf. Mr Bird's scheme has only 120 beneficiaries, just two of whom are active, including Mr Merrett. Eighty nine are deferred members and 29 are drawing benefits.

Dr Farrand accepted the delay as the trustees could have granted the holiday in November, but said that returning contributions already made between March and November 1992 was in effect a return of surplus and against scheme rules. He ordered the company to pay back the £600,000 plus interest within 28 days.

Alistair Meeks of Biddle & Co, Mr Hulme's solicitors, said: "The ombudsman's conclusion is consistent with the position adopted by Mr Hulme in relation to the Merrett's repayment as far back as September 1993. Pension schemes are not piggy banks to be raided when times are tough."

Mr Merrett said: "This is a considerable surprise. The ombudsman has completely contradicted the interim report he made last month."

The case came to light when Mr Bird and Mr Hulme became concerned with the company's plans to save costs by merging the scheme with another company scheme, the Creechurch Pension Fund. Both funds have assets of around £20 million.

Dr Farrand said that the company's letters to Mr Bird on winding up the scheme had been confusing and misleading. He ordered the company to pay Mr Bird £2,484 for costs incurred in seeking financial and legal advice.

Peter Bamford has been with WH Smith for ten years, the last three as head of retail

WH Smith parts company with head of retail division

By Sarah Cunningham

WH SMITH, which has been struggling to improve the performance of its main high street chain, has parted company with the head of its retail division.

Peter Bamford, who has worked at WH Smith for ten years and run the retail side for three, resigned with immediate effect yesterday. WH Smith insisted that he was leaving "by mutual consent" and on amicable terms.

Headhunters have been appointed to find a new managing director of the division, but it is already clear that Bill Cockburn, chief executive, wants to take a more hands-on approach. He has become chairman of the group's retail board and said that the priorities are to improve profitability, sales and customer satisfaction. He emphasised that the strategy for the high street chain is not about to change.

He wants the new managing director to bring "freshness, energy and a new pair of eyes, to drive the business forward". He does not know what Mr Bamford, 43, will do.

After Mr Bamford's departure, the retail division is being restructured into three parts. The 100 airport and railway station outlets are being put into a new, separate division with its own managing director, who has yet to be appointed.

The logisitics and distribution arm of WH Smith Retail is being hived off into a separate business reporting to Richard Handover, who is managing director of WH Smith News, the wholesale and distribution arm of the group. This will leave the next managing director of WH Smith Retail free to concentrate on the 400-strong high street chain.

The company declined to give details of the compensation agreed with Mr Bamford, but it is expected to be only a few months' pay. He was on a two-year rolling contract and last year earned £118,000. He also holds shares and options and is part of the non-contributory pension scheme. His predecessor, Peter Troughton, received a £400,000 compensation package, including a £150,000 pension entitlement.

Tempus, page 30

Pound closes above DM2.80

By George Sivell

THE pound closed above DM2.80 for the first time since its ejection from the European exchange-rate mechanism on Black Wednesday in September 1992. At the official Bank of England close the pound stood at DM2.8019, up 1.46 pfennigs.

Although sterling's return to grace on the foreign exchanges owes more to the dollar's strength against the mark than to the British economy, the strong pound keeps monetary conditions tight, reducing the need for an interest rate rise.

Such arguments will have helped Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to resist calls from the Governor of the Bank of England on Thursday at the last monthly monetary meeting before the election. Yesterday the Bank signalled that base rates were left unchanged at 6 per cent.

The Institute of Directors believes that Britain needs a prompt rise in interest rates to curb inflation pressures. Tim Melville-Ross, Director-General of the IOD, said: "The economic imperatives right now are for a certain amount of activity to be taken out of the economy, either through an increase in interest rates or through a fiscal package of some kind — probably both."

In London shares suffered from American interest rate worries, with the FT-SE 100 index falling 42.5 points to close at 4,270.7. The FT-SE had been up 21 points but dived after figures for retail sales growth in America were revised up to 1.5 per cent from 0.8 per cent for February.

The resulting worries over inflation and further interest rate increases sent the Dow down by almost 100 points in early afternoon trading.

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A recipe for pension problems

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	4270.7	(-42.5)
Yield	3.78%	
FTSE All share	2079.82	(-15.86)
Nikkei	17846.98	(+361.23)
New York:		
Dow Jones	6462.94	(-77.11)*
S&P Composite	747.06	(-11.28)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5⅜%*	(5½%)
Long Bond	93 7/32*	(94 1/16)
Yield	7.18%*	(7.11%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	- 6⅜%	(6⅜%)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	108 19/32	(108 29/32)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6250*	(1.6230)
London:		
$	1.6250	(1.6241)
DM	2.8015	(2.7884)
FFr	9.4247	(9.3853)
SFr	2.3853	(2.3854)
Yen	204.97	(204.82)
£ Index	99.7	(99.3)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7236*	(1.7200)
FFr	5.7985*	(5.7845)
SFr	1.4656*	(1.4695)
Yen	126.04*	(125.75)
$ Index	105.9	(105.7)

Tokyo close Yen 125.00

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun)	$18.25	($18.10)

GOLD

London close	$347.00	($347.85)

* denotes midday trading price

Rentokil Initial chief paid £1.23m

By Paul Durman

SIR Clive Thompson, chief executive of Rentokil Initial, the sprawling cleaning and pest control group, was paid £1.23 million last year, a 44 per cent rise on the year before.

Rentokil Initial, created by last year's £2.3 billion takeover of BET, is one of the UK's biggest employers, mostly of low-paid workers. Worldwide it employs about 140,000 people. Last year they were paid an average of just over £10,300, according to the company's latest annual report.

Sir Clive's bonus rose to £471,000 last year. A spokesman said the bonus was calculated on the same formula that had applied since 1988.

Rentokil Initial resisted making an allegedly overgenerous payoff to John Clark, BET's former chief executive. The dispute went to court last October, and a judge awarded Mr Clark £3 million for wrongful dismissal. Last month, the company said that it still intended to appeal.

Rentokil Initial only just achieved its regularly restated target for 20 per cent growth in earnings per share. The company, which made pre-tax profits of £318 million last year, maintained its record only because of the contribution from Initial and other businesses acquired with BET. Shares in the group have fallen heavily since last month's results.

Rentokil Initial also has businesses providing staff and training, plant hire, security, contract catering and supplying trees and plants to decorate offices.

☐ The total remuneration of Robert Eaton, chairman of Chrysler Corp, more than trebled to $12.6 million as he cashed in on the American vehicle maker's strong performance in 1996.

Mr Eaton's salary of $8.2 million included a $4.5 million bonus. In addition, he exercised stock options worth more than $4.4 million.

The chairman's compensation does not include a grant for new, unexercised stock options for 696,018 shares with a present market value of $4.5 million.

Chaos threatened by Year 00 glitch

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

ESSENTIAL services such as power, the health service and transport could be thrown into chaos by a computer crisis at the turn of the century, according to an expert advising the Government.

Robin Guenier, head of Taskforce 2000, the agency organising the UK's reprogramming of computer software to recognise the new century, said: "We are facing a severe problem that will be bigger than BSE if we don't get to grips with it."

The basic problem is that years have been coded as two digits with the result that 2000 will be treated as 1900 because of the identical zero ending. The work needed to amend this is considerable.

Mr Guenier said a lack of awareness of the problem threatened chaos because computer networks that run utilities, health service organisation and transport systems could malfunction. He gave warning that the cost of reprogramming would be at least £31 billion in salary costs and would need 300,000 extra information technology staff. Most systems will need to be reprogrammed within 17 months to allow time for testing.

"This is an emergency, in the same way a war is treated as an emergency," Mr Guenier said. Problems have begun to affect supermarket sell-by dates. After December 31, 1999 all unaltered computerised equipment, including household devices, could fail.

Mr Guenier, who became Taskforce 2000 chief last year, said the Government needed to take instant action. "We need very senior people to lead this and not delegate things to computer nerds."

Ian Taylor, Minister for Science and Technology, said the Government had taken a lead in creating awareness about the problem. He would not endorse Mr Guernier's £31 billion price tag, saying: "It is not possible to be certain of the likely figure until sufficient full audits needed have been completed." The Government is due to complete its own audit by October.

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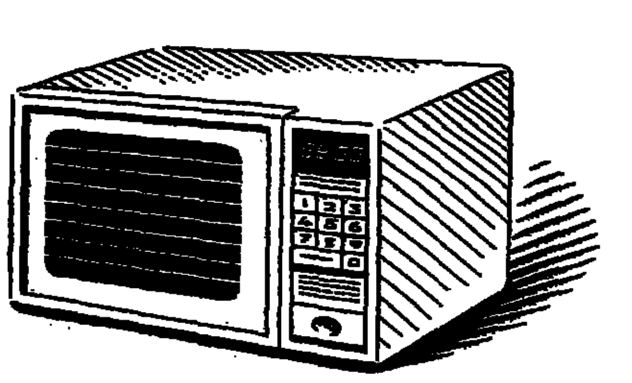

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TT 10

Business disposed to do business with Labour

By Philip Bassett
Industrial Editor

LABOUR'S election manifesto aimed specifically at industry and services — the first by a political party in Britain — was broadly welcomed by business yesterday.

A number of key business figures endorsed Labour while Britain's leading business bodies maintained their political neutrality but welcomed the focus on business issues that the manifesto offered. Conservative and Liberal Democrat leaders attacked Labour's move.

Launching *Equipping Britain for the Future* in the City, Tony Blair said: "Labour is now the party for *business — the enterpreneurs'* champion." All the evidence now showed, he said, that business believed it could work with a Labour government.

Support for Labour came from 84 leaders of small firms in a letter to *The Times* yesterday, many of whom attended the Labour manifesto launch. Sarah McCartney, owner of a marketing consultancy, Little Max, told the launch: "Small business can look forward to a successful future with a Labour government."

Gerry Robinson, chairman of Granada, praised Labour's "repositioning" on business as "*brilliant*", and said: "I can say confidently that business can do business with new Labour. That in my view is one of the healthiest changes *in British politics for a very long time.*" Tim Waterstone, founder of the Waterstone book chain, said: "Labour is good for government, good for business and good for Britain."

Away from the launch, Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, *said it was* "*welcome confirmation*" of many of Labour's shifts towards business. The CBI still opposed key policies such as the windfall tax and union recognition, but welcomed Labour's stance on macroeconomic stability, the PFI and personal taxation.

Ruth Lea, policy head at the Institute of Directors, said: "There is much in it that we can agree with, particularly on macroeconomic stability", although the IoD remained concerned about its public finance targets, the minimum wage and signing the social chapter. But she added: "It's quite incredible how far *they have come since the* early 1980s when there really was an antipathy to business."

Lyonnaise and Suez take on the world

From Adam Sage in Paris

A FRENCH industrial giant was born yesterday when the utilities group, Lyonnaise des Eaux, confirmed plans to take over Cie de Suez, the holding company.

"Our mission is to conquer the world," said Jérôme Monod, 67, chairman of Lyonnaise. Both boards were meeting last night to agree details of the transaction.

The new conglomerate, which is to be called Suez-Lyonnaise des Eaux, will be one of France's five biggest companies, ahead of its immediate rivals, Générale des Eaux and Bouygues. It will focus on four core businesses — energy, water distribution, waste management and communications — and will be able to invest about Fr17 billion in its first year, M Monod said.

The combined group will have an annual turnover of about Fr180 billion and a stock market capitalisation of Fr75 billion.

The merger, which comes at time when French industry is undergoing sweeping changes, *is likely to pave the way for a shake-up in the utilities sector* across Europe, including Britain. Lyonnaise owns three British water companies and also has interests in water treatment and waste management in the United Kingdom.

Analysts believe that the decision to focus on four core sectors could herald the sale of Lyonnaise's construction activities, along with the financial and industrial holdings controlled by Suez.

Suez, however, will hold on to its 63 per cent stake in Société Générale de Belgique, the Belgian holding company, which controls Tractebel, the energy and services giant.

The deal ends the independence of Suez more than a century after it was set up to build and run the Suez canal. Gérard Mestrallet, Suez's chairman, *pushed his* cash-rich but directionless company into the merger after selling assets such as Indosuez, the investment bank, and its property portfolio. Lyonnaise needs Suez's financial muscle in order to expand abroad.

The two boards were expected to approve plans for Suez shareholders to receive 20 Lyonnaise shares for every 41 Suez shares held, as well as sharing special dividend of about Fr3.8 billion.

Although Suez is to be absorbed under a transaction designed to ensure that Lyon*naise need not renegotiate* its local government contracts, M Mestrallet, 48, seems likely to *emerge as the main beneficia*ry. He was expected to be named as head of Suez-Lyon*naise des Eaux's executive* board, with M Monod heading the supervisory council.

Thor £1.3m court settlement

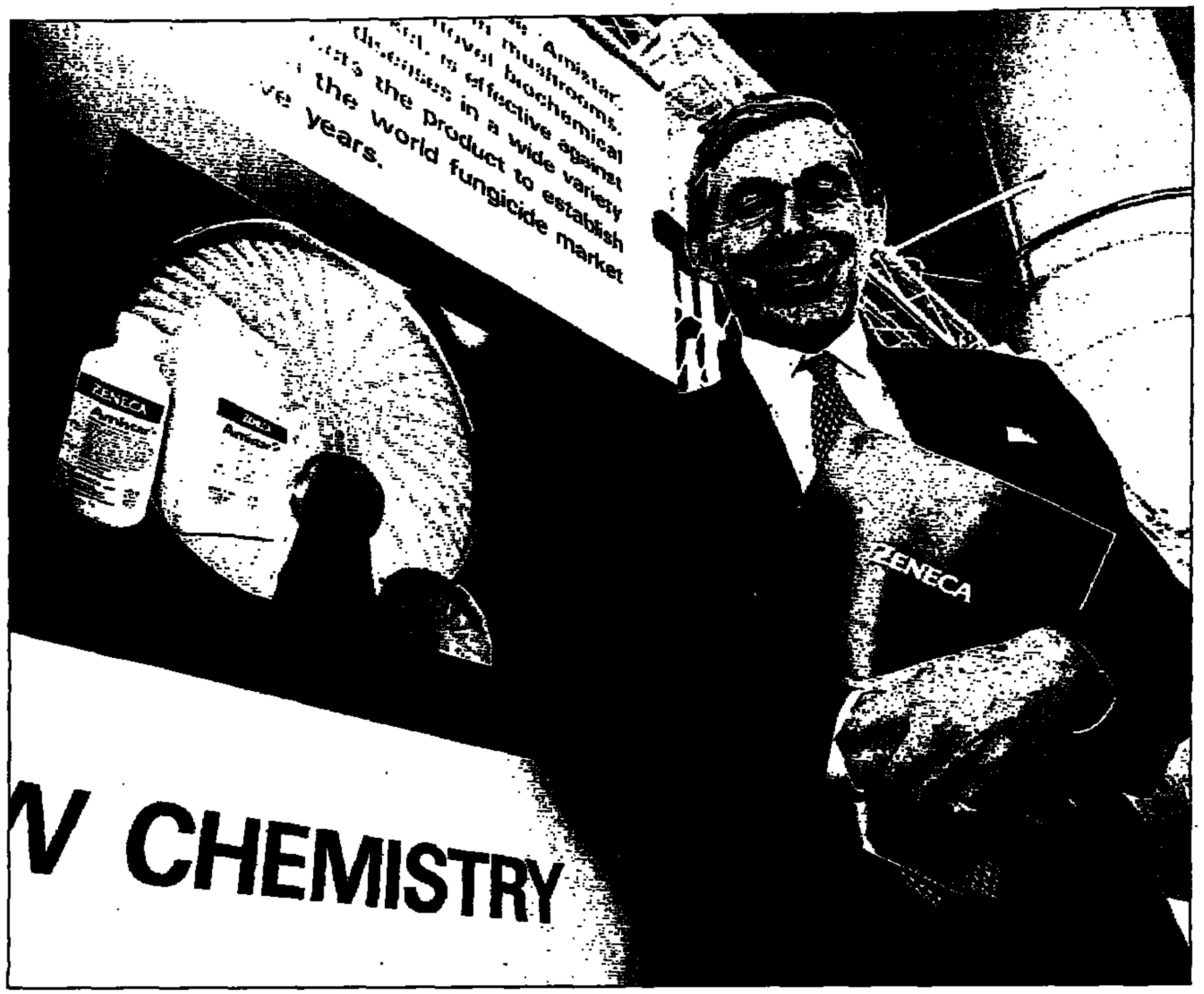
By Frances Gibb
Legal Correspondent

TWENTY South African workers yesterday accepted a £1.3 million settlement of their claims for damages and costs lodged in the High Court in London against Thor Chemical Holdings, a British multinational.

The workers, who were employed by a South African subsidiary of Thor, were poisoned by mercury at the company's plant in Cato Ridge in Natal. Four died and a number are severely disabled. The individual damages range *up to* £100,000.

Albert Dlamini, 30, who received £100,000 and who walks on crutches, said: "Working for Thor has destroyed my life. I feel very bitter that this British company has come to my country and adopted working practices that would never have been accepted in its own country. At least this settlement will allow me to live out the rest of my days in some sort of comfort."

Similar claims are being pursued against *RTZ by* a lung cancer victim who developed the disease after working in a uranimum mine in Namibia and against Cape Asbestos by *some South African* victims of mesothelioma.



Sir David Barnes, head of Zeneca, which is fighting to defend patent protection on its Novaldex anti-cancer drug

US ruling lifts Zeneca's hopes

By Eric Reguly

ZENECA has won a court victory that it believes will preserve American patent protecion on a top anti-cancer drug for another five years. The announcement helped to lift Zeneca shares by 35p, to £18.51, within easy reach of their year high of £19.02½.

The US Court of Appeals *for the Federal circuit* dismissed a challenge to Zeneca's patent on Novaldex, *the world's best-selling breast* cancer treatment, staged by Novopharm, a Canadian generic drugs company. The ruling affirmed a previous ruling in Zeneca's favour, made a year ago in a US district court in Maryland.

Zeneca, of which Sir David Barnes is chief executive, said that the appeal court dismissal will bolster its defences against two other Novaldex challenges, by Pharmachemie BV and Mylan Pharmaceuti*cals. A third challenge,* from Lemmon Company, has been dropped.

Zeneca now expects Novaldex's US patent to remain enforced until its scheduled expiry in 2002. The company was anxious to protect the drug because it has lost its patent protection in most European countries, including the United Kingdom.

Novaldex is the trademark for tamoxifen citrate. Introduced in 1973, it was the first *anti-oestrogen medicine* designed to treat breast cancer; it can be effective in slowing the *growth of tumours and, in* some cases, causing them to shrink.

Novaldex had sales in 1996 of £332 million, down 6 per cent from the previous year, making it the second-biggest selling drug in Zeneca's anti-cancer portfolio, behind Zoladex. Novaldex accounted for almost 14 per cent of Zeneca's total pharmaceuticals sales.

Novaldex does not have the market entirely to itself in the *US. Tamoxifen,* the generic form, is distributed there by Barr Laboratories, but the *competition is somewhat arti*ficial because Barr is a licensed distributor and the *tamoxifen it sells is manufac*tured by Zeneca.

Irish food firms planning £2.5bn dairy processor

From Eileen McCabe
in Dublin

SIX YEARS after merger talks between two of the Republic of Ireland's leading food companies broke down, Avonmore and Waterford are to discuss creating the country's biggest dairy processor.

The new company would have annual sales of about Ir£2.5 billion. It would control *34 per cent of the liquid milk* pool in the Republic and would have a dominant position in the liquid milk market, particularly in Dublin.

In the UK the new company would control 370 million gallons of milk, or about 15 per cent of the liquid milk pool. With Avonmore's extensive US operations, the global milk pool would be about 950 million gallons.

*The Avonmore and Water*ford farmer co-operatives own more than 60 per cent of the *respective companies so any* deal would have to be put to their members.

Waterford yesterday rushed out its controversial 1996 results, showing a 21 per cent fall in pre-tax profit to Ir£20 million, with earnings per share down 33 per cent to Ir6.3p. Less than a month ago the company angered the Irish stock exchange and local stockbrokers when it issued a *profits warning.* Avonmore, based in neigbouring Kilkenny, boasted a 14 per cent *increase in annual* pre-tax profit to Ir£36 million in its statement last month.

Members of A&L set to hold shares

By Gavin Lumsden

THE vast majority of the Alliance & Leicester's 2.2 million members have decided to keep their shares in certificate form when the society floats on April 21.

City sources say that up to 70 per cent of members have chosen certificates, the traditional form of share ownership, rather than keep them in *the society's* electronic nominee account or sell them via its free dealing service. Qualify*ing members are receiving* a flat-rate allocation of 250 shares, worth about £1,000.

Holding the certificate allows A&L members to transfer their shares within 42 days into a personal equity plan. However, such a high level of *member interest* has revived fears that both Crest, the Stock Exchange's paperless trading system, and Pep managers' administration systems will not cope with the demand.

Sell or hold, page 31

Minet sold to Aon of Chicago

By Marianne Curphey

MINET, the loss-making London insurer owned by St Paul Companies, has been sold to Aon Corporation of Chicago for a sum believed to *be in the region of $40 million.*

Minet, which employs 3,000 people in London, will form part of Aon's global insurance brokerage and consulting business. *Under the deal's* terms Aon will not assume liabilities from Minet older policies, some of which date back to the 1960s.

Aon is believed to have outbid March & McLennan, the world's biggest insurance broker, which had been in talks with St Paul.

Minet incurred a $13 million loss on income of $370 million in 1995. St Paul has been looking for a buyer since October when it announced *that the sale was likely to* result in a pre-tax loss of $250 million.

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Source: NRS Sept - Feb '97, BMRC 1995

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.16	2.00
Austria Sch	20.53	19.03
Belgium Fr	60.42	55.82
Canada $	2.374	2.204
Cyprus Cyp£	0.864	0.804
Denmark Kr	11.15	10.35
Finland Mkk	8.83	8.15
France Fr	9.80	9.10
Germany Dm	2.94	2.72
Greece Dr	453	427
Hong Kong $	13.30	12.20
Iceland	127	107
Ireland Pt	1.10	1.02
Israel Shk	5.78	5.13
Italy Lira	2900	2700
Japan Yen	218.10	202.10
Malta	0.656	0.601
Netherlds Gld	3.312	3.042
New Zealand $	2.48	2.26
Norway Kr	11.81	11.01
Portugal Esc	290.50	270.50
S Africa Rd	7.82	7.02
Spain Pta	245.50	228.50
Sweden Kr	13.24	12.24
Switzerland Fr	2.51	2.33
Turkey Lira	219094	205094
USA $	1.720	1.590

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Mark the Midas man

"Sir Mark Weinberg hardly slept on Tuesday night — not, on this occasion, because of a *society event where he is* frequently to be found with his glamorous wife Anouska Hempel. This late night was a strictly business affair. After 35 years in the life assurance industry, Weinberg is now chairing his own publicly-quoted financial services company, scooping £13m in the process . . ."

Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

GrandMet lines up European disposals

GRAND METROPOLITAN, *the food and drinks group, is* negotiating the sale of Brossard, its bakery business in France and Italy, to Sara Lee, the American foods group. The sale, which should be finalised within *the next two to three weeks, is* part of the restructuring of GrandMet's European food business. The aim is to concentrate on main brands, comprising Pillsbury, Green Giant, Häagen-Dazs and Old El Paso.

GrandMet and Sara Lee are to meet French union officials to discuss the impact the move will have on jobs. The sale of the businesses, with turnover of about £92 million last year, is expected to raise about £20 million. Brossard supplies cakes to the French retail market under the Brossard, Gringoire, Savane and Lenotre brand names. It employs about 670 people at three sites in France. Its Italian business, which trades as Fida, also supplies cakes and employs 120 people. Brossard would be managed as a separate *unit by Sara* Lee/DE, The Netherlands-based division of Sara Lee Corp.

Rowlinson agrees bid

BARLOWS, the property *investment and development* group, has made an agreed £46.4 million bid for Rowlinson Securities, a rival building and property company. Barlows is *offering 11 shares for every two* Rowlinson shares, with a cash alternative of 320p a share. Barlows has irrevocable acceptances in respect of 90.3 per cent of Rowlinson. It is raising up to £5.58 million in a two-for-five rights issue to part-fund the deal. Barlow's pre-tax profits rose 57 per cent to £1.22 million for 1996. A final dividend of 1.55p makes a 2.3p (2p) total.

Test for Antonov gears

SHARES in Antonov, developer of a new-style gearbox, set a 12-month high yesterday as the company confirmed progress in taking its product to market. Chrysler, the carmaker, is to test the gearbox in a prototype model of its Neon range. This could lead to a licensing deal, with Antonov on a 5 per cent royalty rate. Gajra, an Indian gearbox company, has also agreed to produce *it. Antonov shares, suspended on* Wednesday at 116½p after jumping 24p, closed at 124p.

Tyco to buy AT&T arm

TYCO INTERNATIONAL, *the commercial* and industrial manufacturer, has agreed to buy AT&T's undersea telecommunications cable business for about $850 million. AT&T *Submarine Systems makes undersea* fiber optic telecommunication cable systems. Tyco, which manufactures disposable medical products, packaging materials, flow-control products and electrical and electronic components, took over ADT, the home security company, for $5.4 billion last month.

M&S man for Australia

MARKS & SPENCER, which plans to open its first outlet in Australia next year, yesterday announced the appointment of its first general manager there. The first task for Carl Oden, formerly a general manager in Birmingham who has been with the company for 32 years, is to find a local franchise partner to help M&S to expand in Australia. Jim McDonald, regional director for Asia Pacific, said the group plans to open initially in Sydney, followed by Melbourne and Brisbane.

Great Portland expands

GREAT PORTLAND ESTATES has increased its presence in *the West End of London* by buying Ilex, a private property company, for £58.6 million. The deal, funded by £41.6 million in cash and £17 million in unsecured loan notes, gives Great *Portland more exposure to Bond Street and other sites south of* Oxford Street. Including property outside the capital, Ilex's annual rental income is £3.46 million net. Great Portland said *this should rise to £4.2 million within 15 months.*

Gehe's AAH sells depot

UNITED DRUG, the pharmaceutical distribution company, is acquiring the Daniels depot of AAH, *the UK subsidiary of* Gehe of Germany for an undisclosed sum. The sale is the first step in a series of disposals demanded by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission as part of its conditional acceptance of Gehe's purchase of Lloyds Chemists. Under the terms of the MMC's agreement another six depots are to be sold.

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CHANGING TIMES

A WORKING WEEK FOR: PAUL STREETER

Playing host to millennium merrymakers

Wembley Arena's director is well advanced with his party plans and intends to make it a night to remember, says **Jon Ashworth**

DES JENSON

Paul Streeter views the Wembley Arena as his building and says that even after a couple of years as director there it still gives him a real kick

ON New Year's Eve 1999, fashionable revellers will be flocking to Wembley, the sport and entertainment complex in northwest London. Thousands of merrymakers are set to pay £250 each for the chance to party the night away, although the precise line-up has yet to be decided. Tickets will be scarce.

The great irony is that the revelries will centre not on Wembley Stadium, scene of Euro 96 triumphs and pop pyrotechnics, but on its smaller sibling, Wembley Arena. Through a cruel twist of timing, the stadium will be closed for construction, pending its genesis into the new National Stadium. The mantle passes to Wembley Arena, reducing capacity at the millennium rave-up from 80,000 to fewer than 12,000. At £250 per ticket, that's a lot of wasted millions.

One man is only too delighted to see the responsibility fall on his shoulders. Paul Streeter, director of Wembley Arena, is well advanced with plans for the evening, only 30 months away, and intends to make it an event to remember. "One of the problems is finding people to work on the night," he says. "It's not far away now. I'd love to see 10,000 people in here paying quite a lot of money per head to celebrate."

> ‘You've got to plan events like a military campaign’

The clean-up team on January 1, 2000 is likely to find it heavy going. I arrive to interview Streeter, 47, on the morning after a sell-out concert by Michael Jackson's cousins, and the enthusiasm of the fans has taken its toll. The stage, looking down on a sea of orange chairs, is strewn with empty mineral water bottles. Rubbish chokes the aisles.

Streeter, who arrived at Wembley two years ago, takes the problem in his stride. A former computer salesman, he has a job many star-struck teenagers would kill for, regularly meeting famous pop stars, and enjoying an endless round of live concerts. Diana Ross and INXS are among forthcoming acts.

About 1.5 million people visited the Arena last year, lining the coffers of Wembley plc, the quoted parent company. Operating profits at the Wembley complex increased to £14.1 million (£9.2 million) in the year to December 31, of which nearly £2 million came from the Arena.

Non-music events in 1996 included the Horse of the Year Show, the Budweiser Basketball Championships, *Gladiators*, and Disney World on Ice. Oliver McCall floored Lennox Lewis and *Lord of the Dance* packed in the crowds.

Streeter is one of three executives responsible for Wembley's main areas of business — the Stadium, the Arena, and conferences and exhibitions — and he takes his job very seriously. "I get really proud," he says, guiding me towards the backstage dressing rooms. "This is my building. After a couple of years, it still gives me a real kick."

He takes a hand in negotiations with pop promoters such as Harvey Goldsmith, but leaves most of the work to his sales and marketing team. A second team deals with the operational and technical side. The logistics are daunting, with on-site parking for 7,000 cars, and 150 stewards and security staff. Running the food and beverage outlets keeps a further 70 people busy.

Streeter is there in the background, handing on-the-day control to one of four event managers. Staff work to a general instruction — or GI — that charts every point of an event down to the minute. Streeter says: "You've got to plan it like a military campaign. Generally, it runs like clockwork."

The hullabaloo is far removed from Wembley's origins as a leafy destination for Victorian day-trippers. In 1889, Sir Edward Watkin, the chairman of the Metropolitan Railway, dreamt up a scheme featuring football and cricket pitches, and a running track, backed up with fountains, waterfalls and flower beds.

The centrepiece was to be a 350-metre four-legged tower, similar to the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The money ran out after just 61 metres, and Watkin's Folly remained a tourist attraction until it was demolished in 1907.

With the ending of the Great War, plans were put in hand for a British Empire Exhibition, with the Empire Stadium at its heart. The venue went on to host successive sporting events, including the 1948 Olympic Games. Wembley Arena started life in 1934 as an enormous swimming pool, including a wave machine and other innovations.

It survived as such until the late Fifties when the building was adapted for the concerts that were becoming all the rage. The pool was filled with triangular supports and covered.

Early sell-outs included the All Star Record Show of March 1959, with a line-up including Petula Clark, Shirley Bassey, Lonnie Donegan and Vera Lynn. In April 1964, Wembley Arena featured the Beatles and the Rolling Stones on the same billing — rare enough, even then. The Dave Clark Five and the Hollies were among others at the *NME* poll-winners' event.

One name from back then, the Monkees, recently returned to Wembley Arena after an absence of 30 years. The critics were not kind, but Streeter, a self-confessed fan, was ecstatic. "It was my sort of era," he concedes. "It was tremendous having them here after all these years." The group mingled with VIPs and well-wishers at the Silvermint, the Arena's backstage watering hole.

Streeter cannot compete with Wembley Stadium when it comes to the headline summer acts — Michael Jackson and U2 are among this year's draws — but wins in terms of year-round consistency. The Arena is an all-weather venue that can be screened off to seat 4,500, creating a more intimate atmosphere. That said, there is no shortage of competition. Earls Court is the bigger London indoor venue, seating 20,000, but tends to hold no more than two or three shows a year.

The NEC in Birmingham has a similar line-up of artists, but tends to feature fewer shows. Big-name acts like to round off their UK tour by "playing Wembley".

The big draws last year included Tina Turner, who played six nights at the Arena and two at the Stadium, pulling in 220,000 people. Streeter shows me the backstage room where the star relaxed before the show — a rather dowdy affair, with two dubious-looking sofas, and a hi-fi and television set.

One well-known rocker complained that the CD player was broken, only to discover that he had put the disc in the wrong way up.

Streeter's working week is not made easier by the fact that he lives near Croydon in south London. He is in the office by 7.30 most mornings, beating the traffic, and often stays late to take in the shows. "I like to be here when an event's on. It's my building. The hours are long, but I still get a real buzz from it." He tends to have little to do with the stars. "We tend not to meet them too often," he says. "A lot of them come straight offstage and depart." Dealing with the masses of screaming girls is someone else's problem. "The artists bring their own security in for back stage. They prefer to work with people they know."

Hiring the Arena typically costs £27,000 to £30,000 a day, although the management may opt instead for a percentage of the gross box office take. The cost is reduced for block bookings. Rentals brought in just over £3 million last year. Pop concerts and sporting events are just part of a wider picture. Streeter sees a profitable sideline in annual general meetings and other special events.

Abbey National and others frequently reserve the Arena as a back-up venue, while BT is due at Wembley for next week's vote on the proposed MCI deal.

Perhaps the most unusual booking of all involved the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), which collapsed in 1991 with debts of $10 billion.

Christopher Morris of Deloitte & Touche, joint liquidator of BCCI, booked the venue for a creditors' meeting in May 1993, and was slightly miffed when only 600 of the 38,000 BCCI creditors bothered to turn up. Wembley was chosen last year as the preferred location for a new National Stadium. The Sports Council has set aside £120 million in National Lottery funding towards the project and work is now proceeding on the design aspects — knock it down and build a new one, incorporating the famous Wembley towers, or refurbish the existing structure.

As it is, the millennium revellers may well encounter a very different Arena when they turn up for the big night. Streeter is seeking to "sell" the name, in the same way that Pepsi took on the Trocadero, and Labatt, the Canadian brewer, linked with the former Hammersmith Odeon in west London.

The successful sponsor will pay up to £1 million a year to see its name in lights.

HIDDEN ASSETS

Prosperity can show its face as restoration is completed

Morag Preston enjoys a preview of a £20m refurbishment by NatWest

Number *One Princes Street*, situated at one of the most important junctions of the City, will be officially back in business next week after a £20 million makeover. *Overlooking the* Bank of England, the Royal Exchange and Mansion House, *the 1920s NatWest* building has at last been restored to its former glory.

Working like worms in an apple from the inside out, with permission to park only *a single* lorry outside the Grade II listed building at any one time, it took *two-and-a-half years* to complete the refurbishment. After two world wars and a bomb at Bank Underground station in 1941, the programme tied in neatly with a need to modernise the offices and recapture the original charm of the building designed by Sir Edwin Cooper. Ranked among the *top three of NatWest's portfolio* of 3,000 properties, the Portland stone building *stands on the site of a former* Union Bank of London building, dating to 1844.

An intricate web of huge steel girders kept the façade in place as the interior of the building was completely gutted. Only the banking hall and original dome, standing at the core of the building, were suspended in place as the top two storeys were temporarily removed. Through two winters and more than one Lord Mayor's Show, the key site lay wholly exposed to the elements. The Portland stone exterior was scrubbed down, unsightly *safety* rails were *removed*, and Ernest Gillick's corner sculpture of Britannia, flanked by Higher and Lower Mathematics, was repaired.

Customers walking into the fan-shaped banking hall will see a re-creation of Sir Edwin's original designs, gleaned from his surviving plans and photographs. The Sixties brown and yellow decor was totally ripped out, replaced with features lost over time. Fine bronze and glazed screens, 1930s light fittings, art deco grills and missing parts of the plaster ceiling have all been reinstated. A team of designers scoured Italy in search of *marble* tiles *to match* the existing few that cover the floor, and the vast *dome* was *repainted to Sir Edwin's* original white colour scheme.

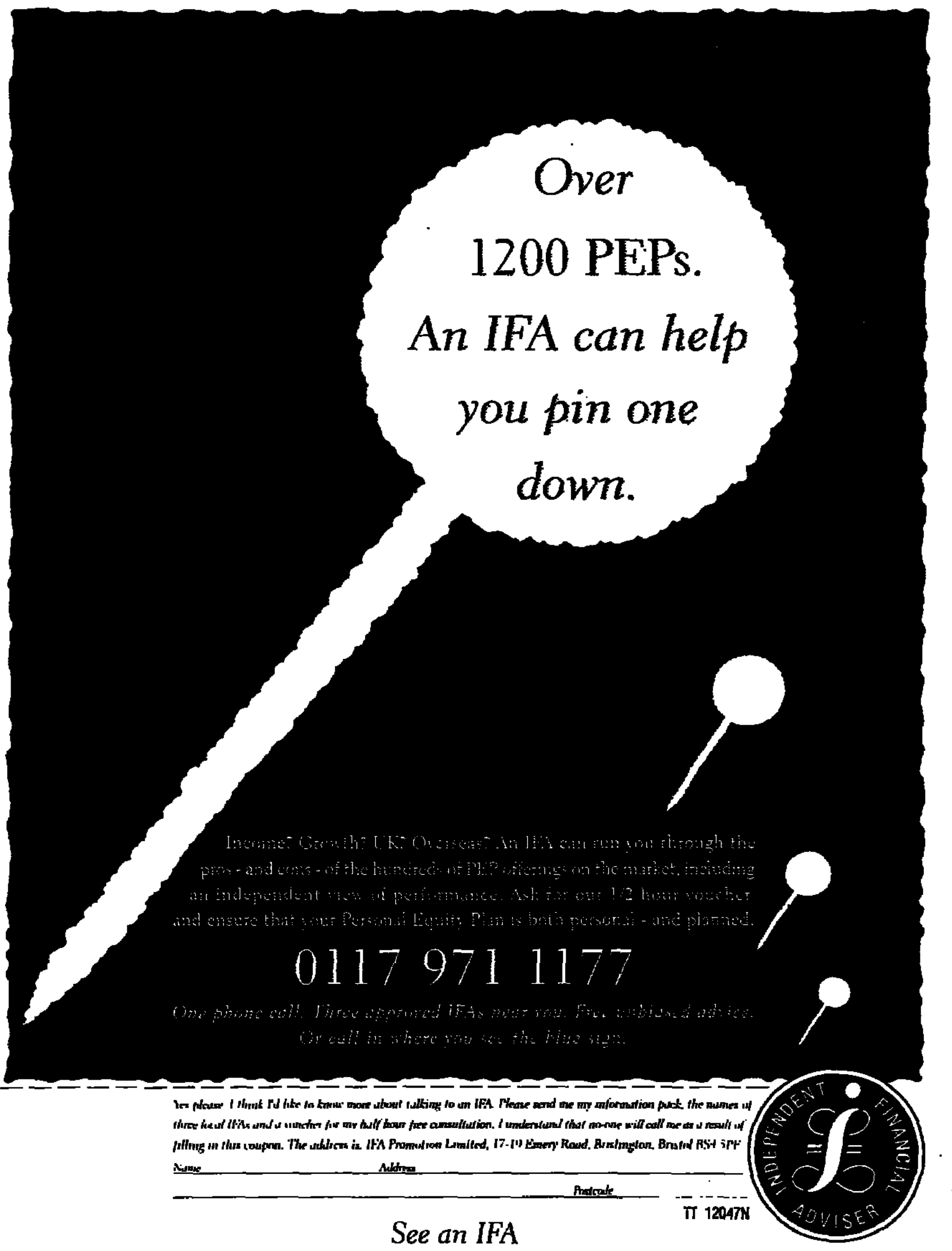
Integrity and Prosperity, the bronze statues by Charles Doman, situated in the tiny corner of the hall that served as a clue to its original design, were covered in plywood during the refurbishment.

The existing upper floors, cellularised into small offices, and designed to accommodate the banking needs of the Thirties, have been rebuilt to allow greater flexibility. The additional accommodation has provided more room for both staff and IT equipment in the 12-storey building.

Three oak panelled rooms, previously on different upper floors, have been brought together on the first floor and linked by a thoughtfully designed corridor. Each one *different in shape, they will* serve as somewhere for the bank to entertain. The Overseas Managers' Room has been rebuilt in its original location, including the recreation of the plaster ceiling and the removal of later side tables. The deep red carpets that cover the floor were specially commissioned to reflect the details in the banking hall below.

Mike Dooling, of T P Bennett, the architect, says the worst stage was demolishing the existing building, and tying it in with the new structure, building from the bottom upwards. While digging into virgin earth, he says, taking the building 1.5m deeper, they rather overzealously made a hole through to Bank Underground station near by.

One of three oak-panelled rooms previously on different floors and now next to each other



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STOCK MARKET CLARE STEWART

Railtrack pulls ahead to touch trading high

RAILTRACK provided some *much needed interest on an* otherwise uninspriring day of trading, when most FT-SE 100 stocks were seeing red by the close.

Diminishing concern over the impact of a Labour windfall tax and a brighter view on prospects for privatised groups helped it to touch a trading high of 454p, although it ended at 441p, up 11½p.

There was also talk of *buying interest from a US* institution, which helped to boost prices in Railtrack's tightly held stock.

The spectre of a rise in US interest rates loomed large again after the publication of higher than forecast prices data. Wall Street's swift reaction on opening pulled back London shares, reversing the morning's modest gains.

By the close the FT-SE 100 was 42.5 points down at 4270.7 after what dealers described as poor volumes of just under 700 million.

Second-liners proved more buoyant than FT-SE 100 *stocks in yesterday's choppier* trading conditions. Among FT-SE 250 companies enjoying good rises was **AEA Technology**, which in line with rises enjoyed by other utilities rose 20p to 500p, a jump of more than 4 per cent.

Biocompatibles *soared* to a new high on further consideration of its plans to launch a new contact lens in in the US. The shares rose 45p to £14.20.

Misys, the computer software group, added 30p to 1210p, on talk of the high costs *companies face reprogramming* computers to cope with the millennium.

WS Atkins, the engineering consultancy, jumped 11½p to 311½p on news that it had won new business from the Ministry of Defence.

Elsewhere, ***United Utilities*** slid back from earlier gains, but closed up 4½p at 674½p. However, **Thames Water**, criticised in a recent report for high levels of water leakage, dipped 4½p to 675p. **National Power** ended its recent run, sliding 1½p lower to 525½p. **PowerGen** fell 5½p to 628p.

Zeneca was in robust form as shares jumped 35p to £18.51. The pharmaceutical group *has held on to its exclusive* rights to Nolvadex, a treatment for breast cancer, aftering seeing off a challenge by Novopharm. **Glaxo** retreated from its best levels and closed 13p lower at £10.95½, while **SmithKline Beecham** ended 15p lower at 902½p.

Among smaller drugs groups, **Scotia** fell 20p to 415p on profit-taking, while **Cortecs International**, which has attracted interest recently, ended 7½p lower at 232½p. **SkyePharma** added 5p to 75p after recent presentations to analysts. **BG** rallied to put on 2½p to 181½p in busy trading while **Centrica** was unchanged at 59¾p.

Shell *motored ahead early* in the day after two broker recommendations, but ended 4p lower at £10.59½. **BP** also fell back, closing 8p lower at 687½p. **Burmah Castrol** was in demand after encouraging comments from brokers. The *shares came off, however, in* the afternoon to end 14p lower at 997½p. **British Borneo**, the oil exploration group, recovered further ground lost after a recent disappointing drilling *report* and rose 28½p to £13.98½.

BOC, the industrial gases group, fell 21½p to 919p. News *of an explosion at its South* London plant was said to have *affected sentiment, but it is* not expected to make an impact on profits. Much of the drop in was attributed to a broker downgrade. **BT** was encouraged higher on the promise of greater freedom to offer enter*tainment services on its net*work under Labour, as well as expectations of EU approval of the company's deal with MCI. By the close, however, the shares were trading 1p lower at 441½p.

Unigate and **Dairy Crest**, *the food groups, both nudged* higher on positive talk. ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, was advising a switch from high-yielding food stock on concerns that a Labour *government* would reduce or abolish tax credits on dividends.

Unigate added 4½p to 464p while Dairy Crest put on 3½p *to 209p.*

Shortage of stock and talk of bid interest from **Siebe**, pushed **Spirax-Sarco**, the engineering group, 25p higher to 702½p. Siebe dropped 26p to 956½p.

Celsis International, the *healthcare group that makes* diagnostic and monitoring systems, moved up from its *low this year of 103½p* to add 4p. Whispers that Celsis will have good news to report next month could fuel further rises.

Banner Homes climbed to a new high for the year after an encouraging profits forecast. The shares added 11p to 81½p. ***Hambro Countrywide*** rose 3½p to 130p in response to a recent housing market survey.

Rowlinson Securities, the property group, jumped 30p to 312½p after an agreed offer from **Barlows**. The £46.37 *million offer values Rowlinson* shares at 371½p. Shares in Barlows fell 4p to 63½p.

Among the top 100 shares **Royal Bank of Scotland** was left nursing a 19½p drop to 530p, a fall of more than 3 per cent. US influences were *blamed for a 9½p fall to 271p* for **Vodafone** while **Tomkins** dropped 9p to 271p.

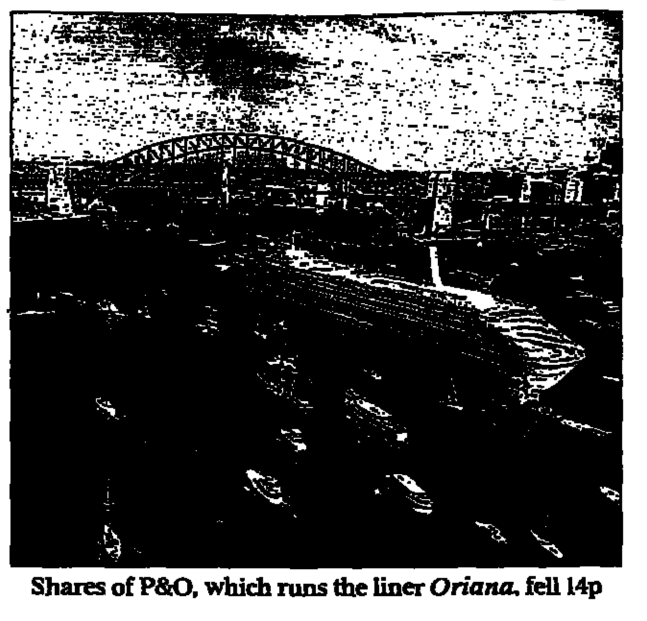
P&O lost 14p to 602½p after profit forecasts were downgraded by BZW, the broker.

Waterford Foods jumped 10p tp 95p after the announce*ment of a bid approach from* Avonmore Foods. **Grand Metropolitan** ended 2p lower at 499½p after the disposal of Brossard, a subsidiary, to Sara Lee, the US group.

WH Smith ended 2p lower at 451½p after the suprise *departure of Peter Bamford,* head of WH Smith retail.

GILT-EDGED: Gilts mirrored equtities as higher morning trading was hit by the Wall Street fall. The June series of the long gilt ended at £$108\frac{19}{32}$, down £$\frac{10}{32}$ on higher volumes than were seen earlier in the week at 70,000. Treasury 8 per cent 2000 ended off £$\frac{5}{32}$ at £$102\frac{12}{32}$, while at the longer end, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was off £$\frac{3}{8}$ at £$101\frac{27}{32}$.

☐ **NEW YORK:** US stocks were *sharply lower in early* trading. At midday, the Dow Jones industrial average was down 77.11 points to 6,462.94.



Shares of P&O, which runs the liner *Oriana*, fell 14p

Food retailers wobbled, after recent gains, on figures from John *Lewis showing a 21.6 per cent fall in food sales in the week to* April 5. Tesco ended 6½p lower at 357½p, while Safeway dropped 8p to 354½p. Asda, which was in demand earlier in the week, ended ½p lower at 110½p, with Sainsbury off 5½p to 330p.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Zeneca	1851p	+111p	News on drug patent
RJB Mining	453½p	+98½p	Results, new projects
Next	631½p	+23½p	Buoyant sector
Biocompatibles	1420p	+222½p	US product launch
Prism Rail	330p	-25p	Report on franchises
Universal Salvage	132½p	-70p	Profits warning
Dixons	546½p	-26½p	Cellnet joint venture
Tarmac	113p	+9p	Recent results
London Clubs	398½p	-10p	Bid referred

MAJOR INDICES

New York:

Dow Jones	6462.94 (-77.11)
S&P Composite	747.06 (-11.28)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	17846.98 (+361.23)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	12516.60 (+157.90)

Amsterdam:

EOE Index	724.38 (-9.09)

Sydney:

AO	2380.5 (-12.4)

Frankfurt:

DAX	3340.05 (-11.44)

Singapore:

Straits	2068.48 (-18.79)

Brussels:

General	*11832.39 (-31.74)*

Paris:

CAC-40	2574.56 (-33.41)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	965.00 (Same)

London:

FT 30	2820.0 (-33.4)
FTSE 100	4270.7 (-42.5)
FTSE 250	4533.8 (-10.5)
FTSE 350	2107.5 (-17.6)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2170.87 (+0.73)
FTSE All-Share	2079.82 (-15.88)
FTSE Non Financials	2141.86 (-14.89)
FTSE Fixed Interest	116.47 (-0.16)
FTSE Govt Secs	*93.46 (-0.14)*
Bargains	45216
SEAQ Volume	698.6m
US$	1.6255 (+0.0015)
German Mark	2.8019 (+0.0146)
Exchange Index	99.7 (-0.05)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4286
£:SDR	1.1858
RPI	155.0 Feb (2.7%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	154.5 Feb (2.9%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Aurora Inv Trust	100	...
Avalon Oil	*89½*	- ½
Avis Europe	129½	...
Bickerton	41½	...
Cambridge Antbdy	*570*	...
Charlton Athletic	60½	...
Close Bros Prot VCT	95	...
Diagonal	*321½*	...
Donatantonio	72	...
Harvey Nash	206½	+ 5
Heal's	*212½*	...
Helphire Group	115	...
Murray VCT 2 (100)	102½	...
Newcastle Utd	*136*	...
Northstar Secs	28½	...
Oxford Tech Venture	95	...
Pathfinder Properties	*37½*	...
Prestbury Leisure	2½	...
Q Group	115½	...
Sibir Energy	*16*	+ ½
Torch Hldgs	107½	...
United Overseas Grp	60½	...
Whitehead Mann	*145½*	...
Worldsec	177	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Biocure n/p (9)	22½	...
Edge Props n/p (135)	15½	...
JKX Oil & Gas n/p (34)	*5½*	...
Luminar n/p (320)	49½	...
Saville Gordon n/p (55)	¼	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

AEA Tech	500p (+20p)
Photobition	515p (+29p)
Parity	505p (+18½p)

FALLS:

Chemring	190p (-10p)
Scotia	415p (-20p)
Ryl Bk Scot	*530p (-19½p)*
Argos	645p (-20½p)
RMC Gp	966p (-30½p)
Danka Bs Sys	*480p (-15p)*
Siebe	956½p (-26p)
PizzaExpress	675p (-18p)
Shield Diag	*637½p (-15p)*
BOC	919p (-21½p)
Com Union	653p (-13p)

Closing Prices Page 45

TEMPUS

Making allowances

HOW will Labour tax business if it wins the election? So far, the City is mulling over three changes. One is certain, the utility tax. The second *is probable, an increase* in capital allowances to promote investment and the third is possible, the abolition of the dividend tax credit — an easy way of collecting £4 billion. The general view is that Labour will *milk the corporate sector to pay for its pledge* on personal taxation but Labour could be more radical. It may introduce changes that turn the financing of business on its head.

Labour believes that British companies *reinvest too little of their profits and pay out* too much in dividends. Increasing the tax allowance on investment in plant and equipment is an obvious step but Labour could go further and adopt proposals by the *Institute for Fiscal Studies* to change the cost of capital for industry. Currently, debt receives a tax subsidy in the form of an allowance against the cost of borrowing. It is an incentive for companies to gear their balance sheets and the consequence has been debt-financed share buybacks and special dividends. *Instead,* Labour could either remove the allowance against interest payments — a move that would be unpopular as it would hurt small businesses — or, it could introduce a tax allowance for equity, applied to share capital *and retained earnings.*

The latter has attractions but as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson points out, it could change the shape of the stock market, penalising high-yielding, heavily borrowed low-growth companies while *subsidising high-growth* companies that reinvest their profits. Another tax on the utilities?

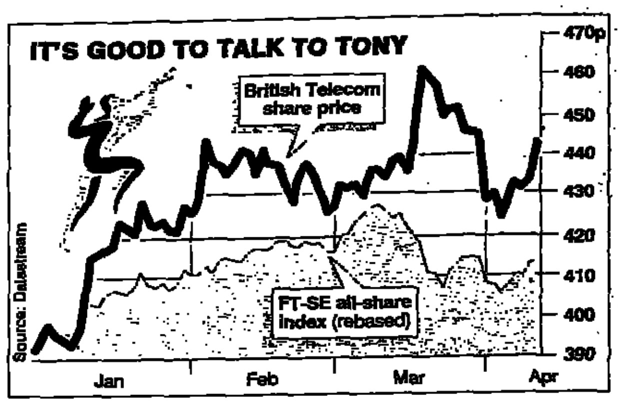
British Telecom

FOR YEARS, British Telecom complained that cable companies were allowed to *use their networks for* telephony while BT was prevented from using its network for broadcasting.

BT could soon get its revenge. Labour said yesterday that it will lift BT's broadcasting restrictions if it *wins the election,* and the prospect of the company's imminent entry into a vast *new business helped to lift* the shares. But BT investors should scale back expectations of untold riches to come. Its network, *comprised mostly* of copper wires, lacks the capacity to handle multichannel television, *video-on-demand* and high-speed Internet access. Building a nationwide network would cost it £15 billion — more than it is paying to buy MCI, America's second largest long-distance carrier.

The fledgling cable companies were offered the right to sell telephone services as an incentive to invest more than £10 billion in their networks. *It would be costly* and foolish for BT to replicate the cable infrastructure across the UK.

This does not mean, however, that BT is out of the game. Smaller projects are possible and time may work in BT's favour. The cable companies have built the highway but they have yet to fill it with paying freight. BT can learn from the mistakes of the cable operators and roll on to the highway when *the time is right.*



IT'S GOOD TO TALK TO TONY

WH Smith

NO ONE expected WH Smith's retail managing director to quit, but, then again, no one was entirely sur*prised. The high street shops* are at the heart of the group, but are also its biggest headache. However good a job the incumbent is doing, the temptation to throw somebody new at the problem is often irresistible.

However, the new head of the division should, in theory, have an easier job. The railway and airport shops and the distribution and logisitics business are being set up as separate divisions, so a successor can concentrate on the *high street.*

On the other hand, Smith's insists that the change in management does not signal a change in strategy. Also, Bill Cockburn, chief executive, has appointed himself chairman of the retail board *and wants to keep a closer* eye on the retail side.

This would all be fine if it were clear that the current *strategy is the right one, but* it is not. The new boss should be able to question and even overturn recent decisions to bring in children's areas and cut the number of books, for example. WH Smith needs a retailer of calibre and charac*ter to run the high street* shops, not a yes man. Shareholders should hope the group chooses the former.

NMT

RESOURCEFUL people, the Scots. *From the country that* gave the world Adam Smith, penicillin and television, a new invention is on its way to the Alternative Investment Market: *the retractable safety syringe.*

At first sight, the device compares poorly with Scotland's other inventions: it looks like little more than a spring tightly packed inside a ball-point pen. However, to *its owner — New Medical* Technology — it is the future of the $3 billion worldwide syringe market. Its technol*ogy is beautifully simple.* The needle retracts instantly after injection, thus protecting health workers from accidental pinpricks and avoiding the subsequent compensation claims against hospitals.

Now, why didn't you think *of that? Unfortunately,* the company is not certain that nobody else has, although it is reasonably confident. While speculative wing-and-a-prayer companies are no stranger to the junior exchange. NMT has yet to ob*tain patent protection.*

It makes no secret of this absence; indeed, it gives warning that companies with "greater research, develop*ment, marketing, financial* and personal resources" may get in before it.

Whatever NMT may lack in protection for its invention, investors cannot complain that the company has not protected them from a risky *investment decision.*

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

May	1013-1012	Jul	1053-1050
Jul	1026-1025	Sep	1062-1060
Sep	1037-1036	Dec	unq
Dec	1021-1020	Mar	1081 SLR
Mar	1031-1030		
May	1041-1040		Volume: 3661

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

May	1565-1560	Jan	1555-1540
Jul	1575-1570	Mar	1540-1520
Sep	1575 SLR	May	1540-1510
Nov	1580-1570		Volume:

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	304.0-03.0
Spot: 313.8		Mar	303.0-01.5
May	311.3-10.9	May	304.0-01.8
Aug	310.5-10.0	Aug	unq
Oct	306.5-06.0		Volume: 3337

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on April 10

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	83.92	127.34	97.34
(+/-)	-1.39	-18.66	-0.99
Eng/Wales:	83.95	130.82	97.17
(+/-)	-1.42	-19.00	-0.42
(%)	+2.0	-19.0	+39.0
Scotland:	80.01	124.92	98.10
(+/-)	+5.56	-30.80	-2.75
(%)	+31.0	-35.0	+29.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	17.55	+0.55
Brent 15 day (May)	18.05	+0.40
Brent 15 day (Jun)	18.25	+0.35
W Texas Intermediate (May)	19.60	+0.40
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	19.70	+0.40

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	196 (n/c)	197 (-1)
Gasoil EEC	168 (+6)	170 (+6)
3.5 Fuel Oil	79 (-1)	81 (n/c)
Naphtha	181 (n/c)	188 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

May	163.25-63.50	Aug	168.50-69.00
Jun	*165.00-65.25*	*Sep*	*170.25 BID*
Jul	166.50-67.00		Vol. 9925

BRENT (6.00pm)

May	*18.06-18.08*	*Aug*	*18.45-18.52*
Jun	18.25-18.26	Sep	18.56 SLR
Jul	18.34-18.38		Vol: 33759

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)

May	98.70
Jul	101.75
Sep	98.15
Nov	100.15
Jan	102.00
	Volume: 700

LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)

May	92.50
Sep	95.00
Nov	97.00
Jan	99.00
Mar	101.00
	Volume: 53

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
May	unq	49.5
Jun		69.0
Nov		77.0
		Volume: 83

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

May 75.50-76.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Apr 97	1450	1390	1411
May 97	1470	1430	1440
Jun 97	1350	1340	1320
Jul 97	*1255*	*1242*	*1250*
Vol: 600 lots		Open interest: 3302	

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LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	2334.0-2335.0	2294.0-2295.0	770350
Lead ($/tonne)	622.00-623.00	627.00-628.00	193175
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1214.0-1215.0	1239.0-1240.0	822675
Tin ($/tonne)	5615.0-5625.0	5655.0-5660.0	22581
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1548.0-1548.5	1590.0-1592.5	1349325
Nickel ($/tonne)	7130.0-7140.0	7245.0-7250.0	91308

LIFFE OPTIONS

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
Alld Dom	420	12½	25	33½	1	17½	22
(*431)	460	0	8½	16½	29	43½	46½
ASDA	110	2	7	9	1½	5	7½
(*110½)	120	0	3	5	9½	11	13
Boots	650	38	51½	58½	0	13	18½
(*687½)	700	2½	22	31½	14½	36½	42½
Br Airways	650	7½	29½	44	5½	28	35
(*652½)	700	0	12	23½	47½	61½	66½
BP	650	39½	57	67½	0	12½	22½
(*688)	700	2	26½	41	13½	34	45½
Br Steel	140	6	11½	11½	1	8½	10
(*145½)	160	0	3	4	14½	23	24
C & W	460	26½	42½	51	0	15½	21
(*486)	500	2	22½	30½	15	36	41
CU	650	12½	49	64	8½	36½	54
(*653½)	700	0½	27½	45	46½	65½	83½
ICI	700	9	37	47½	5	21½	33
(*704½)	750	0	16	25	45½	51	63
Land Sec	750	25½	40½	48½	1	19½	25
(*774½)	800	0½	14½	24	26	49½	54
M & S	460	35	43½	52	0	8½	11½
(*494½)	500	3½	18	29½	8½	26½	29
Nat West	650	42	64½	73	0	14	24½
(*691½)	700	5	33½	45	11	33½	47
Safeway plc	330	24½	31½	36½	0	9	13
(*354)	360	2½	14	21½	7½	24	28
Sainsbury	330	4	14½	22	3½	17½	20½
(*331)	360	0	5	11½	29	39	41
Shell	1050	13	38	58½	21½	41½	59
(*1059)	1100	0	19½	37½	68½	74½	88½
Smkl Bch	900	11½	48½	71½	7½	39½	50½
(*903)	950	0½	28	49	47	68½	78½
Storehse	300	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trafalgar	50	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Zeneca	1800	53½	127	166	6	50½	73
(*1851)	1900	9½	76	113	55	98½	120

Series		Apr	Jul	Oct	Apr	Jul	Oct
BAT Ind	500	12½	42	50	3½	23	36
(*511)	550	0	21	28½	39	51½	64½
Vodafone	260	13	25	32	1	10½	14½
(*272)	280	1½	15	22	10	20½	24½

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Grnd Met	460	43½	53	60½	2½	7½	11½
(*499½)	500	14½	26½	36½	12½	23½	27
Ladbroke	220	14	22	25½	3	6½	9½
(*230½)	240	4	11½	15½	13	16½	19½
Utd Bisc	220	13½	22	25½	4	8	12½
(*229)	240	3½	12	15½	15½	18	23

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
BAA	500	12	28½	37	1½	17	21
(*510)	550	0	8	15½	40	49½	51
Thames W	650	27	50	56	1	31½	35
(*675½)	700	1½	25½	32½	25	60	63½

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
BTR	240	14½	23	27	3½	8	11
(*251)	260	4	12½	17	13	16½	20½
Br Aero	1300	58	97	121	21½	40½	54
(*1327½)	1350	31½	70	94½	45	64	76½
Br Telcm	420	29	39	42	4	17	20
(*442½)	460	7½	17	20½	21	40	41½
Cadbury	500	37½	52	58	4	12½	15½
(*531)	550	9	24	32	25½	34½	38
Guinness	500	16½	30	39	12½	19	23½
(*501)	550	3	10½	18	49	51½	54
GEC	360	17	26	30½	5½	16½	19½
(*369)	390	4	11½	17	23	34½	37
Hanson	280	21	30½	34½	4	9½	13½
(*295½)	300	9	19½	24	11½	18½	23
LASMO	220	15½	22½	27½	7	11	13
(*227)	240	6½	14	17½	18	21½	22½
LucasVarity	200	7	14	18	8½	11½	16
(*200)	220	1½	6½	10½	23	24½	29
Pilkingtn	110	12	14½	—	2	5½	—
(*119½)	120	5½	8½	—	5½	10½	—
Prudential	550	30	47½	58	9½	18½	27
(*568)	600	8½	23	34	36½	45	53
Redland	330	20½	26½	34½	10½	18½	23
(*345)	360	5½	13	21½	30	36½	40
R-Royce	240	9½	19½	25	9	16	18½
(*243)	260	2½	11½	16½	22½	28	30
Tesco	330	27	34	38½	3½	8½	12½
(*357)	360	5½	16½	22½	17	22	26½
Williams	330	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	360	—	—	—	—	—	—

FTSE INDEX (*4270½)

	4150	4200	4250	4300	4350	4400
Calls						
Apr	126½	76½	36½	14	4½	1
May	158	121	90	63½	42	27
Jun	195	161	130	102	79	57½
Jul	*226½*	*191*	*159½*	*132*	*105*	*83*
Dec	—	287½	—	228	—	177
Puts						
Apr	6	13	29	58½	102	152
May	43½	57½	77	101	130	167
Jun	72½	90½	108½	132	159½	189½
Jul	98½	102½	125	149½	170	201
Dec	—	163½	—	204½	—	254

Series		Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Calls Oct	Puts Apr	Puts Jul	Puts Oct
Abby Nat	750	30½	60½	75½	1½	21	33½
(*778½)	800	3	33½	47½	24	44	57½
Amstrad	140	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	160	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barclays	1000	38	78½	95	1	24½	42
(*1036½)	1050	5	52½	67½	18	46	65
Natl Pwr	500	26½	45	48	1	23½	27
(*525½)	550	1	20½	23	25	51½	55

Series		Apr	Jul	Oct	Apr	Jul	Oct
Glaxo W	1050	48½	86½	100½	1½	21½	35½
(*1097)	1100	9	57	72½	13½	41½	61
HSBC	1450	46	108	137	3	44½	70½
(*1492½)	1500	12½	81	110½	20	64	93½
Reuter	550	30½	53½	64	0½	15½	20
(*579½)	600	1	26½	37½	21½	37	43½
Royal & Sun	431	—	—	—	3½	—	—
(*434)	460	0	14	23½	26	34½	41½

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Blue Circ	390	19½	32	39	7	14	20
(*400½)	420	5½	18	24½	23½	29½	35½

Series		May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Kingfishr	650	26½	46	57	12	24	30½
(*661½)	700	6	22½	33½	42½	50½	57

Series		Jun			Jun		
Br Gas	240	9½	—	—	15½	—	—
(*241½)	260	3	—	—	30	—	—

Series		Jun	Sep	Dec	Jun	Sep	Dec
Dixons	500	30½	48	59	17½	24	28
(*521½)	550	13½	24½	35	38	49½	54½
EMI Group	1100	79	103	116	22	43½	54
(*1144)	1150	50	74½	88½	42	65½	76½
Tarmac	110	6½	9½	11	5	8½	11
(*113)	120	2½	5½	7	11½	14½	17
Hillsdwn	180	16½	17	—	3½	5½	—
(*195½)	200	5½	6	—	15½	16½	—
Lonrho	130	9	11½	14½	4	8½	10
(*132½)	140	4½	7	10	9½	14	15½
Sears	90	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	100	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thorn EMI	1500	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	1600	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tomkins	260	19	26½	27½	5½	12½	19
(*271)	280	8½	14	17½	14½	22½	25
Lloyds TSB	500	27	39	51	16½	26	31
(*506½)	550	8½	18	29	47½	54½	57½
Scot Pwr	360	27	35½	39½	8	15½	18½
(*377½)	390	10½	19½	22	21	30½	34
Unilever	1500	79½	113	136	18½	31	42½
(*1542)	1600	27	59½	81	67	80	89½

April 11, 1997 Tot: 51266 Call: 29184 Put: 22082 FTSE Call: 8970 Put: 6005

*Underlying security price.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Jun 97	108-31	109-08	108-14	108-19	70658
Previous open interest: 178411	Sep 97	108-31	109-00	108-17	108-13	1178
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 97	100.12	100.34	99.78	99.80	192641
Previous open interest: 263400	Sep 97	99.30	99.30	98.83	98.80	1557
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Jun 97	127.38	128.00	127.26	127.28	59862
Previous open interest: 114393	Sep 97	127.43	127.80	127.38	127.22	509
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Jun 97	126.70	126.77	126.55	126.64	2542
	Sep 97	125.32	125.32	125.32	125.37	44
Three Mth Sterling	Jun 97	93.37	93.40	93.35	93.37	16273
	Sep 97	93.11	93.13	93.07	93.08	15842
Previous open interest: 456183	Dec 97	92.89	92.91	92.82	92.83	10718
Three Mth Euromark	Jun 97	96.73	96.75	96.73	96.73	20094
Previous open interest: 1290121	*Sep 97*	*96.66*	*96.68*	*96.65*	*96.65*	*10352*
Three Mth Eurolira	Jun 97	93.02	93.09	93.00	93.05	18050
Previous open interest: 267046	Sep 97	93.39	93.44	93.35	93.39	11141
Three Mth Euroyen	Sep 97				99.21	0
	Dec 97	99.05	99.05	99.04	99.04	150
Three Mth Euroswiss	Jun 97	98.05	98.07	98.03	98.03	7628
Previous open interest: 116348	*Sep 97*	*98.02*	*98.04*	*97.98*	*98.00*	*4724*
Three Mth ECU	Jun 97	95.85	95.86	95.83	95.83	1016
Previous open interest: 29767	Sep 97	95.79	95.81	95.77	95.76	201
FTSE 100	Jun 97	4334.0	4345.0	4272.0	4273.0	16098
Previous open interest: 63471	Sep 97	4352.0	4352.0	4352.0	4299.0	100

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 *Finance Hse 6½*
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6 Low 5½ Week fixed: 5½
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 6⅛; 3 mth 6⅛ Sell: 2 mth 6¹⁄₁₆; 3 mth: 6¹⁄₁₆

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	6⅛-6	6¼-6⅛	6⅜-6¼	6⅝-6½	
Sterling Money Rates:	6⅛-6¹⁄₁₆	6¼-6³⁄₁₆	6¹¹⁄₃₂-6⁹⁄₃₂	6²¹⁄₃₂-6¹⁹⁄₃₂	7-6⁷⁄₈
Interbank:	6⅛-6¹⁄₁₆	6¼-6⅛	6¹¹⁄₃₂-6⁹⁄₃₂	6²¹⁄₃₂-6¹⁹⁄₃₂	7-6⁷⁄₈
Overnight, open 6, close 5½					
Local Authority Deps:	6⅛	n/a	6¼	6⅝	6⅞
Sterling CDs:	6⅛-6¹⁄₁₆	6¼-6⅛	6⅜-6⁵⁄₁₆	6⁹⁄₁₆-6½	6¹⁵⁄₁₆-6⅞
Dollar CDs:	5.60	n/a	5.72	5.93	6.27
Building Society CDs:	6⅛-6⅛	6¼-6⅛	6⅜-6⁵⁄₁₆	6⅝-6⁹⁄₁₆	6⅞-6¹³⁄₁₆

TREASURY BILLS: Applcts: £1,075m allotted: £200m; Bids: £98.48% received: 53%; Last week: £98.48% received: 75%; Avge rate: £6.0853% last wk £6.0914%. Next week: £200m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5⅝-5½	5¹¹⁄₁₆-5⁹⁄₁₆	5¹³⁄₁₆-5¹¹⁄₁₆	6-5⅞	5½-4½
Deutschemark:	3¼-2⅞	3¹⁄₁₆-3	3³⁄₁₆-3⅛	3¼-3⅛	3½-2¾
French Franc:	3⅛-3	3⅛-3¹⁄₁₆	3⁵⁄₁₆-3³⁄₁₆	3⅜-3¼	3⅛-2⅝
Swiss Franc:	1⅝-1½	1⅝-1⁹⁄₁₆	1⅝-1½	1¹¹⁄₁₆-1⁹⁄₁₆	2½-1½
Yen:	⅝-½	⅝-⁹⁄₁₆	⅝-½	⅝-½	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $348.20-348.50 **Close:** $346.75-347.25 **High:** $348.45-348.95
Low: $346.05-346.55 *AM:* $348.65 *PM:* $347.95

Krugerrand: $346.00-349.00 (£213.00-215.00)

Platinum: $371.50 (£228.45) **Silver:** $4.79 (£2.945) **Palladium:** $147.95 (£90.85)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for Sept 9	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.1383-3.1510	3.1478-3.1510	⅛-⅛pr	2½-2⅛pr
Brussels	57.690-57.864	57.767-57.864	17-12pr	48-41pr
Copenhagen	10.627-10.675	10.666-10.675	⅛-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Dublin	1.0477-1.0517	1.0494-1.0513	7-3pr	21-15pr
Frankfurt	2.7955-2.8028	2.8002-2.8028	⅝-½pr	2½-2⅛pr
Lisbon	279.34-280.21	279.90-280.21	⅛pr-⅛ds	⅛-⅛pr
Madrid	235.50-236.07	235.81-235.94	⅛-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Milan	2756.7-2762.0	2758.2-2761.8	18-33ds	44-66ds
Montreal	2.2600-2.2719	2.2686-2.2707	0.56-0.50pr	1.14-1.05pr
New York	1.6224-1.6258	1.6245-1.6254	0.075-0.055pr	0.248-0.217pr
Oslo	11.303-11.341	11.327-11.336	⅛-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Paris	9.3850-9.4298	9.4197-9.4298	2⅝-2⅛pr	7½-7pr
Stockholm	12.465-12.504	12.487-12.502	⅛-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Tokyo	204.42-205.20	204.83-205.10	⅛-⅛pr	3-2⅝pr
Vienna	19.639-19.726	19.706-19.726	⅛-⅛pr	1½-1⅛pr
Zurich	2.3826-2.3874	2.3838-2.3867	⅛-⅛pr	2½-2⅛pr

Source: Extel *Premium - pr. Discount - ds.*

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.2693-1.2701
Austria	*12.11-12.12*
Belgium (Com)	35.51-35.55
Canada	1.3964-1.3969
Denmark	6.5574-6.5594
France	5.7900-5.7930
Germany	1.7210-1.7220
Hong Kong	7.7485-7.7495
Ireland	1.5470-1.5490
Italy	1695.60-1697.10
Japan	126.03-126.13
Malaysia	2.5042-2.5052
Netherlands	1.9347-1.9352
Norway	6.9665-6.9715
Portugal	172.02-172.12
Singapore	1.4395-1.4405
Spain	145.09-145.12
Sweden	7.6759-7.6834
Switzerland	1.4648-1.4658

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6243-1.6270
Australia dollar	2.0641-2.0667
Bahrain dinar	0.6055-0.6175
Brazil real*	1.7188-1.7224
China yuan	13.290-13.500
Cyprus pound	0.8210-0.8310
Finland markka	8.2725-8.3885
Greece drachma	434.75-441.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.5917-12.6053
India rupee	57.71-58.67
Indonesia rupiah	3872.0-3940.6
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4885-0.4985
Malaysia ringgit	4.0708-4.0750
New Zealand dollar	2.3393-2.3431
Pakistan rupee	64.60 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8450-5.9600
Singapore dollar	2.3401-2.3431
S Africa rand (com)	7.1880-7.2100
U A E dirham	5.8975-6.0215

Barclays Bank GTS * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	396	Land Secs	1,500
ASDA Gp	5,800	Legal & Gn	4,800
Abbey Ntl	2,900	Lloyds TSB	5,800
Allied Dom	2,100	LucasVarity	3,400
AB Foods	556	Marks Spr	3,310
BAA	5,200	Mercury Asset	535
BAT Inds	5,400	NatWst Bk	3,700
BG	18,500	Nat Grid	11,200
BOC	2,100	Nat Power	5,100
BP	5,200	Next	1,900
BSkyB	2,100	Orange	1,400
BTR	5,100	P & O	3,500
BT	21,900	Pearson	686
Bk of Scot	1,700	PowerGen	3,310
Barclays	3,000	Prudential	3,800
Bass	1,400	*RMC*	*469*
Blue Circle	1,300	RTZ	1,900
Boots	3,000	Railtrack	5,300
BAe	1,100	Rank Group	1,000
BA	*1,400*	*Reckitt Col*	6,600
British Land	694	Reed Intl	1,400
Brit Steel	8,000	Rentokil Inl	755
Burmah Cstl	588	Reuters	1,400
Burton	1,100	Rolls Royce	1,300
Cable Wire	3,900	Royal & Sun	2,700
Cadbury	2,800	Royal Bk Sct	2,600
Carlton Cms	1,700	Safeway	2,600
Centrica	9,100	Sainsbury	3,000
Cm Union	2,000	Schroders	63
Dixons	834	Scot & New	2,600
EMI	219	Scot Power	7,600
Energy Gp	2,300	Svrn Trent	2,300
Enterpr Oil	1,600	Shell Trans	29,100
GKN	1,000	Siebe	1,100
GRE	2,000	*SmKl Bch*	*3,400*
GUS	445	Smith Nph	1,400
Gen Acc	198	Smiths Inds	1,400
Gen Elec	7,500	Std Chartd	2,800
Glaxo Well	*4,400*	*TI Gp*	*876*
Granada	3,700	Tate & Lyle	1,200
Grand Met	7,500	Tesco	19,100
Guinness	3,400	Thames W	504
HSBC	*1,300*	Tomkins	5,400
Hanson	2,000	Unilever	780
Hays	2,700	Utd Utilities	3,300
ICI	2,300	Utd News	987
Imp Tob	3,000	Vodafone	7,700
Kingfisher	798	Whitbread	213
LASMO	2,100	Wolseley	1,100
Ladbroke	2,900	Zeneca	2,000

WALL STREET

	Apr 11 midday	Apr 10 close
AMP Inc	35¼	35¼
AMR Corp	83½	84¼
ASA	34½	34¼
AT & T	34¾	34½
Abbott Labs	55½	56¼
Advanced Micro	38½	39¼
Aetna Life	86½	86¼
Ahmanson (HF)	36½	37¼
Air Prod & Chem	68	68½
AirTouch Comm	23	23¼
Alberto-Culver B	26½	26¼
Albertson's	31½	31½
Alcan Alumnm	31	31¼
Allied Signal	69½	69½
Alum Co of Am	66½	66½
Amax Gold Inc	6½	6½
Amerada Hess	*48½*	*49¼*
Amer Brands	49½	49½
Amer El Power	40¼	40½
Amer Express	58½	59½
Amer Genl Corp	37½	38½
Amer Home Pr	58½	59¼
Amer Intl	115½	115½
Amer Stores	44	44½
Amer Standard	45½	45½
Ameritech	*59½*	*59*
Amoco	82½	83½
Anheuser-Busch	42½	42¼
Apple Computer	18¹⁵⁄₁₆	18½
Archer Daniels	17½	18
Armco	3½	3¼
Armstrng Wrld	63½	63½
Asarco	26½	26½
Atl Richfield	125½	129½
Auto Data Pro	41½	42
Avery Dennison	38½	38½
Avon Products	55½	56¼
Baker Hughes	36	36½
Baltim Gas & El	26	26½
Banc One	40½	41½
BankAmerica	103½	105½
Bank of NY	34½	35½
Bankers Tr NY	77½	78
Barnett Banks	46½	47½
Bausch & Lomb	36½	37
Baxter Intl	43½	44½
Becton Dickinsn	44½	45½
Bell Atlantic	59½	59½
Bell Industries	*17½*	*17½*
BellSouth	41½	42¼
Black & Decker	30½	30½
Block (H&R)	30½	30½
Boeing	101½	102½
Boise Cascade	30½	30½
Bristol Myrs Sq	59½	60½
Browning Ferris	27½	28½
Brunswick	27½	27½
Burlington Nthn	*72½*	*73½*
CMS Energy Corp	31½	32½
CNA Financial	103½	103½
CPC Intl	80½	80
CSX	45½	46½
Campbell Soup	47½	47½
Can Pacific	23½	23½
Carolina Pwr	35½	35½
Caterpillar	77½	77½
Central & SW	*19½*	*20½*
Champion Intl	43½	43½
Chase Manhtn	92½	94½
Chevron Corp	63½	64½
Chrysler	*29*	*29½*
Chubb Corp	53½	53½
Cigna Corp	145	146½
Citicorp	108	110½
Clorox	114½	115½
Coastal Corp	45	45½
Coca Cola	55½	57½
Coca Cola Ent	56½	57½
Colgate-Palm	101	101½
Columbia Gas	57½	57½
Columbia/HCA	31½	31½
Compaq Comp	75½	75½
Comp Ass Intl	42½	43
Conagra	*53*	*53½*
Conrail	113½	113½
Cons Edison	29½	29½
Cons Nat Gas	49	50
Cooper Inds	42½	42½
Corestates	49½	49½
Corning Inc	44½	45½
Crown Cork	54½	54½
Dana Corp	31½	32½
Dayton Hudson	41½	42½
Deere	42½	43½
Delta Air Lines	88½	88½
Deluxe Corp	31½	31½
Digital Equip	*25½*	*25½*
Dillard Dept St	30½	30½
Disney (Walt)	73½	74
Dominion Res	35	35½
Donnelley (RR)	32½	33
Dover Corp	54½	55½
Dow Chemical	80	80½
Dow Jones	38½	38½
Dresser	28½	27½
Duke Power	*43½*	*43½*
Dun & Bradstreet	24½	25
Du Pont	101½	102½
Eastman Chem	51½	52½
Eastman Kodak	*75*	*75½*
Eaton Corp	70½	70½
Edison Intl	22½	22½
Elect Data Sys	39½	39½
Emerson Elec	46½	47½
Engelhard Corp	19½	20½
Enron Corp	36½	37
Entergy	23	23½
Ethyl Corp	9	9½
Exxon	102½	103½
FMC Corp	61½	61½
FPL Group	43½	44
Federal Express	51½	51½
First Bk Sys	73½	74½
First Union Rlty	13½	13½
Fleet Finl Grp	57½	58½
Fluor Corp	51½	52
Ford Motor	32½	32½
GTE Corp	43½	44½
Gannett	83	84
Gap Inc Del	32	32½
Gencorp	*18½*	*18½*
Gen Dynamics	63½	63½
Gen Electric	100½	101½
Gen Mills	59½	60½
Gen Motors	57½	54½
Gen Reinsurance	*156½*	*157½*
Gen Signal	37½	37½
Genuine Parts	46½	46½
Georgia Pac	72½	73
Gillette	78½	78½
Glaxo Wellc ADR	35½	36
Goodrich (BF)	36½	36½
Goodyear Tire	51½	51
Grt All Pac Tea	23½	23½
Great Wstn Fin	41½	41½
Halliburton	66½	67½
Harcourt General	44½	44½
Heinz (HJ)	40	40
Hercules	39½	40
Hershey Foods	51½	51½
Hewlett Packard	50½	50½
Hilton Hotels	25½	25½
Home Depot	56½	56½
Homestake Mng	*14½*	*14½*
Honeywell	70½	71½
Household Intl	82½	90½
Houston Inds	20½	20½
Humana	21½	21½
ITT Corp	58½	58½
Ikon Office	30½	29½
Illinois Tool	83½	84½
Illinova	21½	21
INCO	31	31½
Ingersoll Rand	44½	44½
Inland Steel	18½	18½
Intel Corp	135½	137½
IBM	133½	132½
Intl Flav & Fr	41½	41½
Intl Paper	40½	41
James River Va	29½	29½
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	53½	54½
Kellogg	*65½*	*66½*
Kerr-McGee	56½	56
Kimberly-Clark	48½	48½
Kmart	12½	12½
Knight-Ridder	37½	37½
Lilly (Eli)	79½	79½
Limited Inc	17½	17½
Lincoln Nat	51½	51½
Litton	38½	39½
Liz Claiborne	45½	46½
Lockheed Martin	82½	83½
Louisiana Pac	17½	18½
MCI Comm	37½	37½
Manpower Inc	*36½*	*37½*
Marriott Intl	50½	51½
Marsh & McLnn	117½	118½
Masco Corp	35½	35½
May Dept St	45½	45½
Maytag Corp	21½	21½
McDonalds	48½	49½
McDonnell D	61½	62½
McGraw Hill	52½	52½
Mead Corp	52½	52½
Medtronic	62½	63½
Mellon Bk	74½	75
Merck Inc	82½	83½
Merrill Lynch	*85½*	*90*
Microsoft	96½	96½
Minnesota Mine	82½	83½
Mobil Corp	123½	124½
Monsanto	38½	39½
Morgan (JP)	95½	96½
Motorola Inc	56½	56½
Natl Semi	26½	27½
Natl Service Ind	41	41½
Navistar Intl	9½	9½
NY Times A	42½	43½
Newmont Mng	40½	40½
Niag Mohawk	8½	8½
Nike B	55½	55½
NL Industries	10½	10½
Noram Energy	14½	14½
Nordstrom	37½	37½
Norfolk Sthrn	88	89½
Nthn State Pwr	46½	46½
Norwest Corp	45½	46½
Nynex Corp	44½	44½
Occidental Pet	23½	23½
Ohio Edison	19½	19½
Oracle	36½	37½
Oryx Energy Co	17½	18½
Overseas Ship	*17½*	*17½*
Owens Corning	38½	38½
PHH Corp	44½	46
PPG Industries	50½	51½
PNC Bank	39½	39½
PPaL Res	19½	19½
Paccar Inc	69½	69
Pacificorp	20½	21½
Pac Enterprises	31½	31½
Pall Corp	*22½*	*22½*
Parker Hannifin	44½	44½
Peco Energy	19½	19½
Penney (JC)	45½	45½
Pennzoil	46½	47½
Pepsico	32½	33½
Pfizer	84	85
Pharm & Upjhn	35½	35½
Phelps Dodge	73	73
Philip Morris	*38½*	*114½*
Phillips Pet	38½	38½
Pitney Bowes	58½	59½
Polaroid	37½	38½
Procter & Gmbl	118½	119½
Providian	54½	55½
Pub Serv E & G	24½	24½
Quaker Oats	37½	38½
Ralston Purina	77½	78½
Raychem Corp	*81½*	*82*
Raytheon	44½	44½
Reebok Intl	47½	47½
Reynolds Metals	63	63
Rockwell Intl	62	62½
Rohm & Haas	73½	73
Royal Dutch	171½	171½
Rubbermaid	26½	25½
SBC Comms	51½	52
Safeco Corp	38½	39½
St Paul's Cos	66½	66½
Salomon Inc	52½	57½
Sara Lee Corp	40½	40½
Schering Plough	71½	72½
Schlumberger	103½	105½
Seagram	37½	37½
Sears Roebuck	45½	45½
Shell Trans	103½	102½
Sherwin Wlms	25½	25½
Skyline Corp	21½	21½
Snap-On-Tools	37½	37½
Southern Co	21	21½
Sprint Corp	44½	45½
Stanley Works	35½	35½
Sun Company	24½	24½
Sun Microsys	28½	29
Suntrust	46½	47½
Supervalu	28½	29½
Sysco Corp	34½	34½
TRW Inc	49½	49½
TCC Inds	2½	2½
Tandem Comp	12½	12½
Tandy Corp	51½	52½
Temple Inland	51½	51½
Tenneco	38½	38½
Texaco	104½	106½
Texas Inst	81½	82½
Texas Utilities	33½	33½
Textron	101½	102½
Time Warner	41½	42½
Times-Mirror A	54½	55½
Timken	54½	54½
Torchmark	54½	54½
Toys R Us	26½	26½
Transamerica	84½	86½
Travelers	48½	49½
Tribune	41½	41½
Tyco Intl	57½	58½
UST Inc	29½	29½
UAL	70½	71½
US Inds	35½	35½
US West Comm	32½	32½
US West Media	16½	17½
USAirways Group	25½	26½
USX Marathon	28½	27
Unicom	19½	19½
Unilever NV	182½	183½
Union Camp	46½	46½
Union Carbide	*47½*	*44½*
Union Pacific	58½	59
Unisys Corp	6	6
USF&G Corp	20	20½
US Life	*45½*	*45½*
United Tech	73½	74½
Unocal Corp	37½	37½
VF Corp	67½	68½
WMX Tech	30½	31½
Wal-Mart Stores	28	28½
Warner-Lambert	92½	93½
Wells Fargo	260½	270½
Westinghouse El	18	18
Weyerhaeuser	44½	45½
Whirlpool	46½	46½
Whitman	23½	23½
Winn Dixie	32½	33½
Woolworth	21½	21½
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	57	58
Xerox	56½	57½
Yellow Corp	18½	19
Zenith Elect	12½	12½

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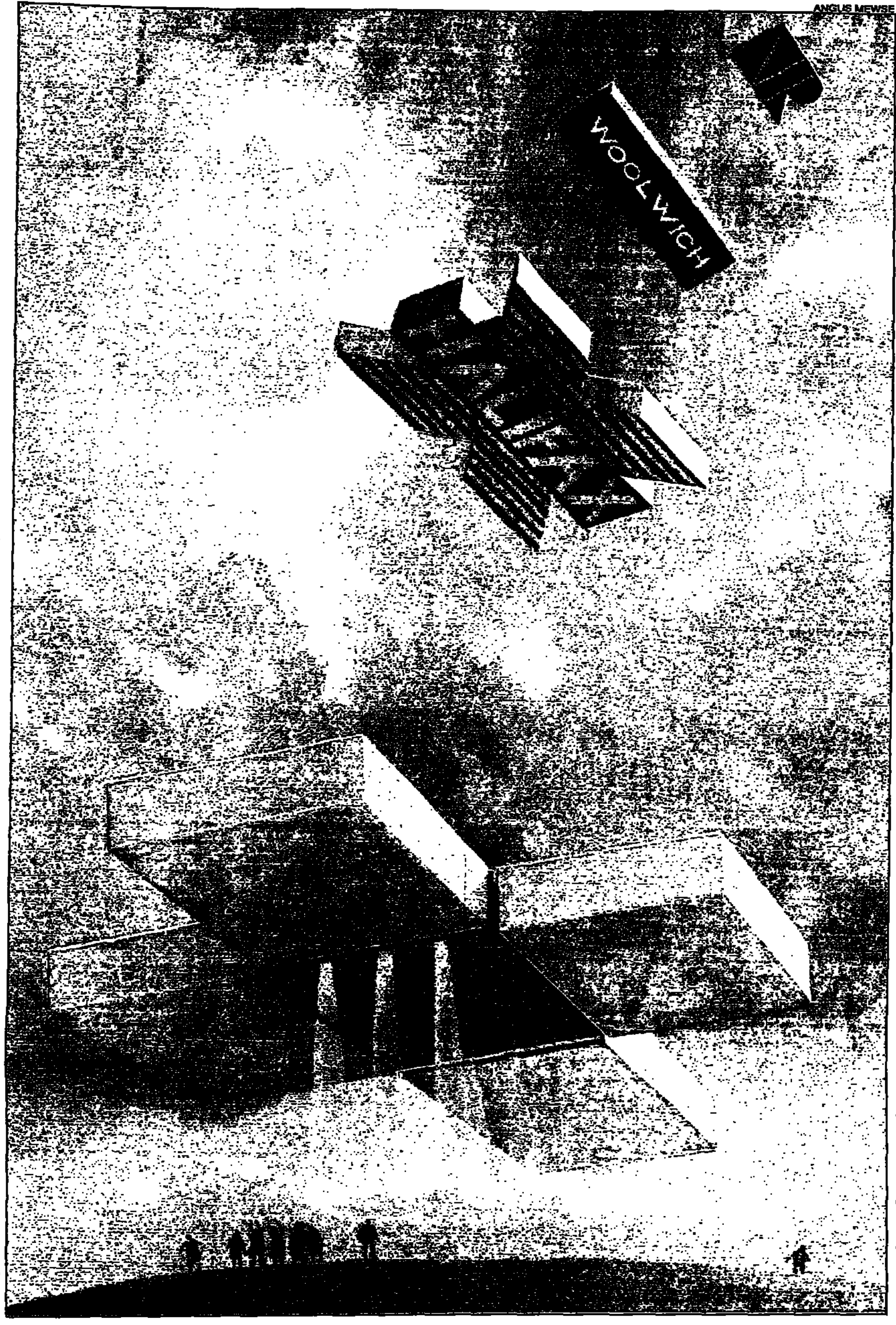
WIDOWS' PIQUE 33
War widows are angry at pension rules

WEEKEND MONEY

PENSION TENSION 37
The frozen pension that melted away

THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



ANGUS MEWSE

Caroline Merrell looks at the detail of the flotation

Halifax clear for market landing

The Halifax took a step *nearer the stock market* this week, with the announcement of arrangements for those who wish to sell and for those who wish to keep their shares.

The *share* education programme designed to help first-time investors deal with the intricacies of the stock market follows in two weeks. The society's eight million borrowing and saving members who are to receive free shares will be notified of their allocation at the end of this month, or early in May. Halifax has its market debut in June.

Early indications suggest that as many as 750,000 customers *will wish to sell their* shares on the first day of dealing. For this group, the Halifax is offering a special share dealing service which will be free for the first ten days after flotation. Initially this service will operate by post for sales, but telephone dealing will be introduced.

Those who want to buy more shares will be able to do so, via the telephone, from the first day after flotation. They will *have to pay a minimum* dealing commission of £12.50 or 0.5 per cent. Selling shares after the ten-day free dealing period will attract a minimum charge of £7.50 or 0.5 per cent.

Because the Halifax is eager to keep as many of its shareholders as possible and would be happy to see them acquire more shares, it is providing various options to promote loyalty.

Members can put their shares into a specially devised *Halifax Shareholder Account,* the simplest alternative for those who wish to sell some *but not all of their shares or to* buy more. As this will be a nominee-type account, investors will not get their own share certificates, leaving them without the traditional proof of ownership. However, each account holder will receive regular notification of the value of *his holding* and will have his dividends paid into this account.

Sue Concannon, Halifax Share Dealing, managing director, said it eventually hopes to offer more services through the share-dealing operation. She added: "Members will be able to transfer other shares to the Shareholder Account, which will be free for at least three years."

Those who do not want to hold their shares in this way *can apply to have share certificates.* They can also keep their shares in a single-company personal equity plan (Pep). If the shares are held in the single-company Pep, then the member can invest the other £6,000 of their general Pep allowance with another Pep manager. As the shares are deemed to have no transfer value, they can also invest a further £3,000 in Halifax shares, and benefit from the *breaks on a single company* Pep (see page 32). Ms Concannon added: "Single-company Peps *may not* be suitable for everyone. Non-taxpayers or those on a lower rate of tax may not benefit from taking out this sort of Pep."

If share certificates are opted for, then the member will not be able to use the Halifax share dealing services. Instead, they will have to go through another broker. Sharelink, the execution-only broker, charges a minimum of £10 on its nominee account.

As its flotation date of April 21 is less than ten days away, the 2.4 million members of the Alliance & *Leicester* should have now decided whether to sell their shares, put them in a Pep, or the corporate nominee account or opt to have their own share certificates. The shares of those who missed yesterday's deadline for returning allocation forms will be held with the society awaiting instructions.

SHOULD YOU SELL OR HOLD?

Brokers advised those with Alliance & Leicester shares to hang on to *them, unless they had debts* or other outstanding financial commitments. For example, the interest on the outstanding credit card bill, which rings up at about 23 per cent, is unlikely to be matched by any return that could be generated by the Alliance & Leicester. The small number of shares allocated may not be cost-effective to hold.

Jeremy Batstone, of NatWest *Stockbrokers, thinks* A&L shares will be worth keeping because the society could be taken over. "The likelihood of the Alliance & Leicester surviving as an independent entity is about as likely as a second lieu*tenant surviving the First* World War," he said.

Societies *that* become *banks are protected from* takeover for five years, unless they themselves become predators. But Mr Batstone said that a company wishing to bid for the A&L could make a friendly approach to the board that might not be rebuffed.

He added that all converting societies could face difficulties. "They will not be able to offer the same savings and mortgage rates *as the mutuals because they* will have to satisfy their shareholders' needs." He said Abbey National's share of the mortgage market had fallen to 2.5 per cent this year against about 12.5 per cent last year.

WEEKEND MONEY
is edited by Anne Ashworth

Beauty parade or City clone zone?

In a week in which pension savings were made safer by new laws, (see page 38) a worrying trend in the management of pension funds was revealed. Pension fund trustees are supposed to have a wealth of options when choosing the manager of the money they guard. The selection is nicknamed "the beauty parade". *City firms* pose before them in a bid to show they are the financial equivalent of *Miss Venezuela.*

According to new research, however, the candidates are starting to look the same. Combined Actuarial Performance Services (Caps) analyses pension fund performance. *In a new study, it said* the difference between the *better managers* and their underperforming competitors was strikingly small in 1996.

Surveying 1,620 funds with a total value of £269 billion, Caps found the median average return was 10.8 per cent, against 19.6 per cent in 1995.

However, just 2.2 per cent seperated the typical "higher-performance" manager from the typical "lower-performance" *manager. The gap,* known as the inter-quartile range, is the smallest since performance measurement began in 1970.

John Clamp, chief executive, said part of the explanation is consolidation in the pensions industry, which has seen five or six fund management companies become dominant. But Caps leaves the question dangling: are pension fund managers doing the same thing?

ADAM JONES

A least-unfair utility tax

PERSONAL INVESTOR

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Labour's utility tax is an obsolete wheeze to grab privatisation proceeds without selling anything. On two occasions such a tax might have *been* justified. One was in 1991-92, when some utilities benefited from falling inflation because of *the* structure of price *controls.* Had Labour won in 1992, it could have pounced. By now, any gain has been drowned in all the water flowing *under the* regulatory bridge.

The second was in 1995-96, when takeover protection was lifted from electricity *and water companies.* The City demanded heavy cash payouts in addition to normal dividends from companies *deemed able to borrow* heavily, and there were big takeover premiums. Billions were disgorged that neither the selling *Government, nor* buying investors, had thought to be surplus at privatisation.

Kenneth Clarke could have pocketed £5 billion on that basis. He chose not to, because that would rewrite sales contracts on a one-way basis. Government offered no compensation for changing the law to the detriment of British Gas and confiscating a lot of its business.

Even the 1995-96 bonanza has swiftly *become* history. Nearly all regional electricity companies and two water groups have been taken over, mostly *minus their* surplus cash. It is cynical to penalise new shareholders, or somehow pretend that a levy hurts boardroom fat-cats. Labour *relies,* however, on revenue from the only tax impost it has presented to the electorate. So a levy there would be. The issues are how *much, who* pays and on what basis. Inspired reports that Tony Blair wants to levy "only" £3-5 billion sent City traders out buying on Thursday. That looks a dangerous *game, though* useful for those of us small investors who still want to sell. Utilities have some bargaining power, *given the legal wrinkles of such a tax,* but fiscal pressures on the next government grow by the minute.

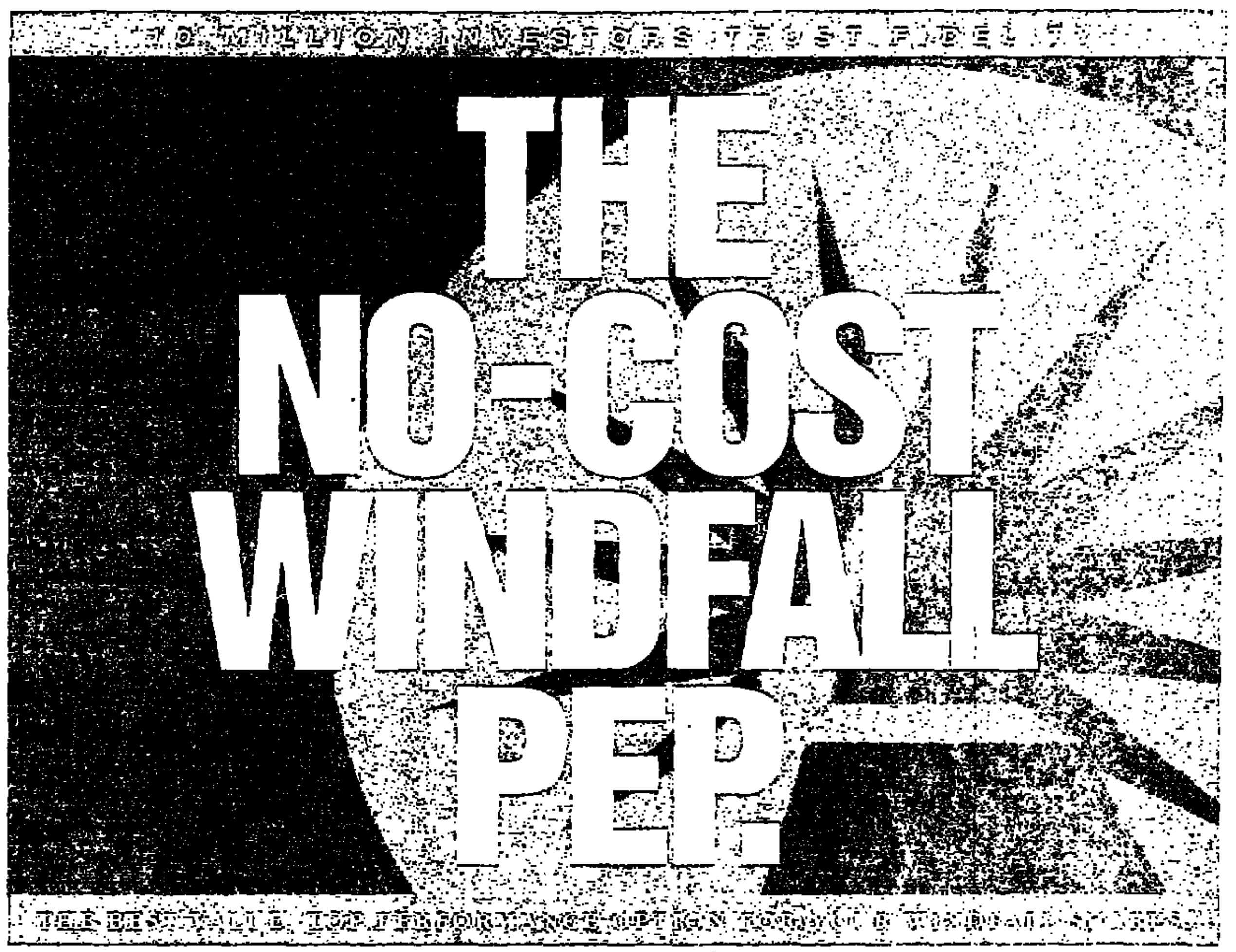
The wider the levy is drawn, the less the individual pain and the less likely it is to suffer legal challenge. This is the *slim case for drawing in BAA and* buoyant newcomers such as Railtrack. Including generators looks pragmatic but has little logic.

Unlike banks in 1981, however, utilities have no common basis to levy a tax. As the Institute for *Fiscal* Studies concluded, any regime will be unfair between past and present shareholders, and between companies. A levy based on either sales, profit margins or return on capital would discriminate unfairly between industries of widely varying character. Any attempt to define excess profits is doomed to endless dispute. Regulators might dredge their files for the profits they projected when they set price limits, but that would only apply to profits earned after the first price review. For most utilities, there are no valid local or international comparisons. Any *a priori* definition of "normal" profits would be subjective and would come back to haunt its champions.

The only solid factual basis for allocating the tax burden is to measure returns to shareholders. These include dividends, capital growth and one-off payouts, which could be compared with returns on the FT-SE 100 share index.

That is not fair either. Management of Wessex Water boosted returns via a successful venture into waste disposal. Most small BT *investors bought stock from government* in the second and third tranches and have fared badly. The biggest gainer *from early outperformance was the* Treasury. And why should acquirers be taxed on takeover premiums? Yet such *an approach looks the least unfair. It* should focus the tax on regional electricity and water companies that have *yielded the highest unexpected returns* and spare British Gas, whose shares underperformed.

To that end it is vital that "excess" returns be measured right up to the present day. If the calculations are cut off in 1995, as in the IFS exercise, electricity companies are heavily favoured at the expense of Gas and BT. If up to date, electricity and water pay most of the tax.



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Gavin Lumsden explains the benefits and pitfalls of Peps designed to attract windfall shares

Float into tax haven with care

The £23 billion free share bonanza of 1997 is proving a windfall for the personal equity plan industry, thanks to the Inland Revenue.

In a special concession to the ten million people benefiting from these share distributions, the taxman has declared that any saver or borrower receiving shares when a building society becomes a bank can put them in a Pep within 42 days at "zero value". So, anyone wishing also to invest their full £9,000 annual allowance in Peps may do so.

However, the uninitiated should take care amid the multiplicity of Pep offers. A *Times* survey shows that many schemes that will be offered to windfall shareholders have pitfalls. Anyone, for example, opting to swap their shares for units in a unit trust risks losing that "zero value" concession (see below). Furthermore, although holding shares in a Pep spares them from income tax and capital gains tax, Pep fees may mean that only big windfalls benefit.

For millions of savers, this will be the first time they have considered a Pep. The Alliance & Leicester and the Halifax have announced their Pep options and other converting societies are expected to follow suit.

In view of the big opportunity, the rest of the Pep industry has been amazingly slow to offer transfer services to windfall shareholders. Only a few Pep managers are able, or willing, to let people hold shares direct within a Pep — although companies such as Virgin are hurriedly talking to regulators and stockbrokers to try to start a service before the A&L issues shares on April 21.

Many unit trust companies have opted out because they have no administrative systems to collect dividends, seek tax credits and send transaction statements to shareholders. Most are making the best of a bad lot by offering to exchange windfall shares for units in their funds, arguing that these are a lower-risk, more diversified investment. A few Pep providers, such as troubled Morgan Grenfell, may not even let you do this.

The late marketing rush by Pep providers and demutualising companies means investors will need to act carefully and quickly.

■ If you are a regular saver with a Pep already and expect free shares, check what service the Pep company is offering. If it is not what you want, stop your April payment going through or you will be committed to the plan for 1997-98. You can transfer Peps, but this will cause delay in what will be a fraught summer for investors and Pep providers.

■ The central question is do you want to keep the shares? Mark Matthias, of Henderson Investors, suggests no, saying: "The building society conversions will double the size of the banking sector without increasing the size of the market. Are they all going to make money? I don't think so. Most people who don't have a substantial portfolio would do better to diversify into a collective fund such as a unit or investment trust."

However, most experts, such as Charles Levett-Scrivener, of Towry Law, believe that demutualisation shares will be boosted by City institutions desperate to buy them. All of the societies, except perhaps the Halifax, may also become takeover targets after flotation if they themselves go on the takeover trail.

Market speculation will further strengthen the price. Mr Levett-Scrivener recommends hanging on for three months, while others suggest a year. Of course, you may look at the sterling performance of Abbey National shares and decide to be a long-term holder.

■ If you decide to keep the shares, you should avoid single company Peps. These can hold the shares of only one company at a time. You are allowed only one plan a tax year. If you expect further share windfalls, you could be lured into breaching Pep rules by taking out another in the same year, thus losing all the tax breaks. Unlike general Peps, single company Peps inhibit you from diversifying later into collective funds such as unit and investment trusts or lower-risk corporate bonds. "A Pep is not just for flotation, it is for life," Mr Levett-Scrivener says. "A general Pep will give you much more flexibility in years to come."

Halifax caused consternation this week when it said it will offer only a single company Pep to its 8.5 million members. Experts fear that thousands of people may unwittingly break tax law by taking up single company Peps when the Woolwich, the Northern Rock and Norwich Union float.

PHIL NOBLE/NTI

LIKE millions of savers, Jill Hulme is facing the question of what to do with her first shares when Halifax floats on the stock market in June. "Unfortunately, I didn't get round to being a carpet bagger and I am only getting the one set of shares," she said.

Still, having had a mortgage with the society for eight years and a 90-day high interest rate account since 1987, Jill, 33, is expecting a windfall of £1,000 to £1,500 in shares. Wanting to put the money aside for a rainy day, Jill read to see what her options were. "I realised it was sensible to shelter the shares within a Pep as it avoids paying income and capital gains tax. However, you have to move quite quickly, within 42 days of receiving the shares."

After ringing for the details of several companies she turned to the independent financial adviser who helped her to sort out her affairs when she set up a marketing company in Macclesfield, Cheshire. He recommended Perpetual's General Pep which charges a holding fee of £4 per dividend (£8 a year). "I'll see how they perform and make a decision on whether to sell and convert them into units in a few months' time."

Accounting for cost of Pepping windfall shares

Companies allowing shares in their general Peps include Fidelity, Henderson Investors, Invesco, John Govett, Johnson Fry, M&G, Mercury, Perpetual, Save & Prosper and Skandia. All have an established track record in managing investment funds and Peps.

Transferring your shares into these providers is free, but there are other charges. With one exception, all are charging a fee for holding the shares in the Pep. Invesco and M&G are levying an annual fee per share set of £15 and £8. Pepping three sets of windfall shares with Invesco would cost £45. In contrast Mercury is charging a flat fee of £15, irrespective of the number of windfalls. Henderson, Perpetual and Skandia are charging £5, £4 and £3 respectively for each dividend paid on the shares. These will be paid twice a year, doubling the price for each share set.

Save & Prosper and Johnson Fry will hold the shares in their Peps free for a year before charging. From next April S&P will collect a £25 annual fee per windfall, which could easily outweigh the tax advantages of staying in the Pep. Johnson Fry will charge 1.5 per cent of the value of the shares, which could soon mount up if you are a multiple share owner. Fidelity will make no charge until April 1999 and will charge £15 if no further investment in its funds has occurred.

Charles Fry of Johnson Fry believes that windfall shareowners should consider these charges before transferring into a Pep: "1,000 Halifax shares might yield you £40 each year. If you're paying a £15 fee you might as well have left it outside the Pep."

The cheapest offer currently is from John Govett, the specialist manager of tracking and futures and options funds. It has promised to make no holding charge and is offering a fairly straightforward 0.2 per cent dealing charge if the shares are sold later.

Fidelity, Henderson, M&G, Mercury and Perpetual will sell the shares for free but only if you reinvest the cash in their unit trusts or investment trusts. Fidelity charges £35 if you sell the shares for cash. S&P will levy a 1.75 per cent dealing fee from April 1998. Skandia charges 1.2 per cent now, rising to 1.95 per cent on May 31 next year.

However, three of the companies will not allow new investors to hold the shares in their Pep without putting additional money in their funds. Henderson requires £2,000 or £100 per month, S&P a £3,000 lump sum, and Skandia a £1,000 lump sum or £50 monthly savings scheme.

However, John Govett has the highest initial charges on its unit trusts if you do buy their funds: 3.25-5.5 per cent compared with nothing for M&G and Perpetual and 0.3 per cent for Fidelity. Behind these charges there lurks the suspicion that Pep managers have no interest in taking on the burden of managing the shares in the long term.

But Chris Cottrell, marketing director of S&P, is reserving the right to limit the company's offer if the administrative demands become too onerous. S&P was fined £115,000 last year for breaching Pep rules and is fearful of what could happen in June and July if millions of investors transfer shares in the Halifax, Woolwich and Norwich Union. "We have invested substantially in our Pep administration since last year," he said. "Nevertheless, those of us who have good offers on the table could be absolutely flooded by demand. What are we going to do if we get a million deals?"

Mr Levett-Scrivener recommends focusing on companies with a track record in handling large volumes of shares within Peps. "Perpetual has allowed investors to put privatisation shares in its Peps since 1987, M&G has its investment trusts experience, as does Mercury."

The pick 'n' mix option

An option for people prepared to take a more active interest in their financial affairs is a self-select Pep run by a stockbroker. Self-select Peps allow you to shelter any number of different shares and unit trusts. You can choose to pay for advice or plan your investments on your own. Although most brokers are offering a free transfer to windfall shareowners, other charges do tend to be higher than general Peps.

Pillings, which is based in Manchester, is charging £6.75 for each dividend and a 1.65 per cent dealing charge, with a minimum of £10. Killik & Co, is levying £7.50 per dividend and 1.65 per cent on dealing for its Unrestricted Pep. Cater Direct charges a flat fee of £55, while NatWest Stockbrokers collects 0.6 per cent of the value of the portfolio each year. Alliance & Leicester is also offering a self-select Pep, managed by Barclays Stockbrokers, although it is quite expensive. On top of a 1 per cent annual management fee, there are dealing costs starting at 2 per cent for trades under £750 and 1.5 per cent for deals up to £10,000.

Matthew Orr, of Killik & Co, said: "If you want to keep your options open, a self-select Pep will let you hold as many windfall shares as you want. If you want to add a unit trust later, you are not restricted to the funds of just one provider — unit trust groups make their fees from unit trusts and will not want to manage shares for ever. If you want to sell straightaway, you should use the building societies' free selling services."

Trusts target windfalls

About 17 unit trust groups are offering to exchange windfall shares for units in their general Peps above the normal £6,000 annual allowance. For new investors, all, except Lincoln, are waiving Pep set-up charges. Apart from GT Global and HSBC, these companies require the shares to be worth a minimum amount. If the amount falls short, investors have to supplement it with cash. Barclays Unicorn and Portfolio require £1,000, while Schroders is asking new investors to stump up £3,000 or start a £50 monthly savings scheme.

Britannia Building Society, Capel-Cure Myers, Clerical Medical and Legal & General are waiving the cost of selling the shares and the initial charge on their unit trusts. Framlington caters for those who want to keep some of the shares and diversify within financial stocks. Three quarters of the shares have to be exchanged into its Financial unit trust, with the rest held for no fee until April 1998.

But remember. Exchanging windfall shares for units could lose you the benefit of the zero value subscription. Alliance & Leicester's new Capital Growth general Pep will not take shares but is open to members who want to exchange them. This week the society confirmed that it will sell the shares outside the Pep before investing proceeds in the Pep. This cash sum will count towards your £6,000 limit.

The Stock Exchange has published a guide to share ownership to coincide with the wave of windfalls. For a free copy ring 0171-797 1372.

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Sell-out of the Century pensioners

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

The ghastly ghost of Robert Maxwell, a spectre beyond even the imagining of Edgar Allen Poe, is slowly being banished from the consciousness of the nation's 11 million company *pension* scheme members.

The latest step towards this exorcism was *taken this* week with the implementation of sections of the Pensions Act that make the plunder of funds harder to commit and easier to detect and punish (see page 38). The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA), the new pensions watchdog, now presides over the 200,000 company schemes that hold £600 billion of our savings.

Unfortunately, OPRA's consider*able powers*, which extend to ensuring that scheme administration is correctly carried out, only came into effect six days ago. As a result, it cannot help the 80,000 hapless members of the *scores of small company* schemes, controlled by Century Life, the insurer. Their numbers include the staff at Citizen's Advice Bureaux who are more accustomed to counselling others on their financial problems. All are *victims not of theft, but* of the sundry ills that have dogged both company and personal pensions in the past decade including overeager salesmen.

Their troubles began five years ago when their schemes were transferred from Crown Financial Management *which had made a speciality of* selling pension funds to small businesses through its salesmen and financial advisers. At the time, Century saw taking over the administration of such schemes as a marvellous *money-making opportunity*.

The principal problem for the scheme members has been the difficulty in obtaining information about their pensions, the kind of information that OPRA will ensure is provided regularly to all employees. Some members are close to retirement and *are anxious to know the size of their* income in old age. In its defence, Century has argued that the paperwork *for many* of the Crown schemes was woefully inadequate. The fat commissions paid by Crown to its *middlemen out of contributions* mean that a few schemes cannot meet their liabilities. Some firms have gone out of business and some trustees could not be located.

However, the Pensions Ombudsman's Office, which handles disputes between schemes and individuals, has brought considerable pressure to bear on *Century to sort out the mess*. Some progress has been made but the delay is now intolerable. The Department of Trade and Industry, which has responsibility for insurance companies, should interest itself actively in this affair, making it impossible for Century to substitute apologies for action any longer.

Jenny Grove reports on hardship under the 'third rate' rule

Cruel trap for war widows

March 31, 1973 is a significant date for members of the *Armed Forces and their* families. *It* marks a change in the Armed Forces Pension Scheme which allowed a serviceman's widow one half of *her husband's military* pension, up from one third.

There was only one snag. Widows of those who had completed their military ser*vice before March 1973 were* excluded from the legislative largesse — their pensions remained at the old rate. The result was to draw a cruel *dividing line between older* widows, some of whom now face hardship, and younger ones. Members of the Armed *Forces still* serving in March *1973* were given *the* opportunity to buy in a half-rate widows' pension. Those who had already retired had no such chance. Today about *52,000 elderly widows still* receive "third rate" pensions.

A study of 14 comparable Allied schemes by the Officers' Pensions Society, headed *by Major General Peter Bon*net, reveals that no other country pays such poor pensions to military widows. "Their husbands *invariably* fought *through the* Second World War. At the very least *these ladies deserve a fair* pension," he said.

Last year Nicholas Soames, as *Minister* for the Armed Forces, said that improving "third rate" widows' pensions by raising the rate from one *third* to one half would cost *about £29 million a year*.

One widow receiving only one third of her husband's pension is Mrs May Harbin, 84. Her husband, Lieutenant *Colonel* Henry Harbin, whom she married in 1936, was parachuted into Normandy on D-Day where he was wounded twice. He retired *from the Army in* 1965 and died 21 years later. Mrs Har*bin said it was "utterly wrong"* that widows in her position should be penalised because their husbands had left the forces before March 1973. "My husband spent 41 years in the Army. It's not much of a reward for long service, is it? *It's quite hard to manage* on my income. I just have to be frugal," she said.

Coronation Street recently highlighted another quirk in *military pensions when it* featured a war widow who fell in love. In the television series, Clare Palmer forfeited her war widows' pension *when she decided to live with* Des Barnes. Having opted for *romance rather than income*, Clare lost both when the relationship foundered. A war widow loses her DSS and Forces Family pensions if she remarries or lives with a man as husband and wife.

It may be some consolation for real-life Clare Palmers that should such relationships break down, their war widows' pension will now be restored automatically after a rule change *this month. Even so*, many war widows are unwilling to consider remarriage for fear of jeopardising their financial security. Pension rules, they claim, consign them to permanent widowhood.

Wrong side of the date

PHIL YEOMANS

Kate Bartholomew, 75, gets no military pension, because she married Major John Bartholomew in 1974, after he had left the Army. His wartime career included minelaying on the Norfolk coastline, bomb disposal work and a rescue attempt at Great Yarmouth across a mined beach, for which he was awarded the George Medal. His first wife died in 1973 and he retired from the Army that year. Since *his death, 20* years on, Mrs Bartholomew has received no military pension.

Until April 6, 1978, the Armed Forces Pension *Scheme did not* pay pensions to widows who married after their husbands had retired. The rules were changed on that date to enable *such* widows to get a pension, but only if their husbands served in the Forces after April 1978.

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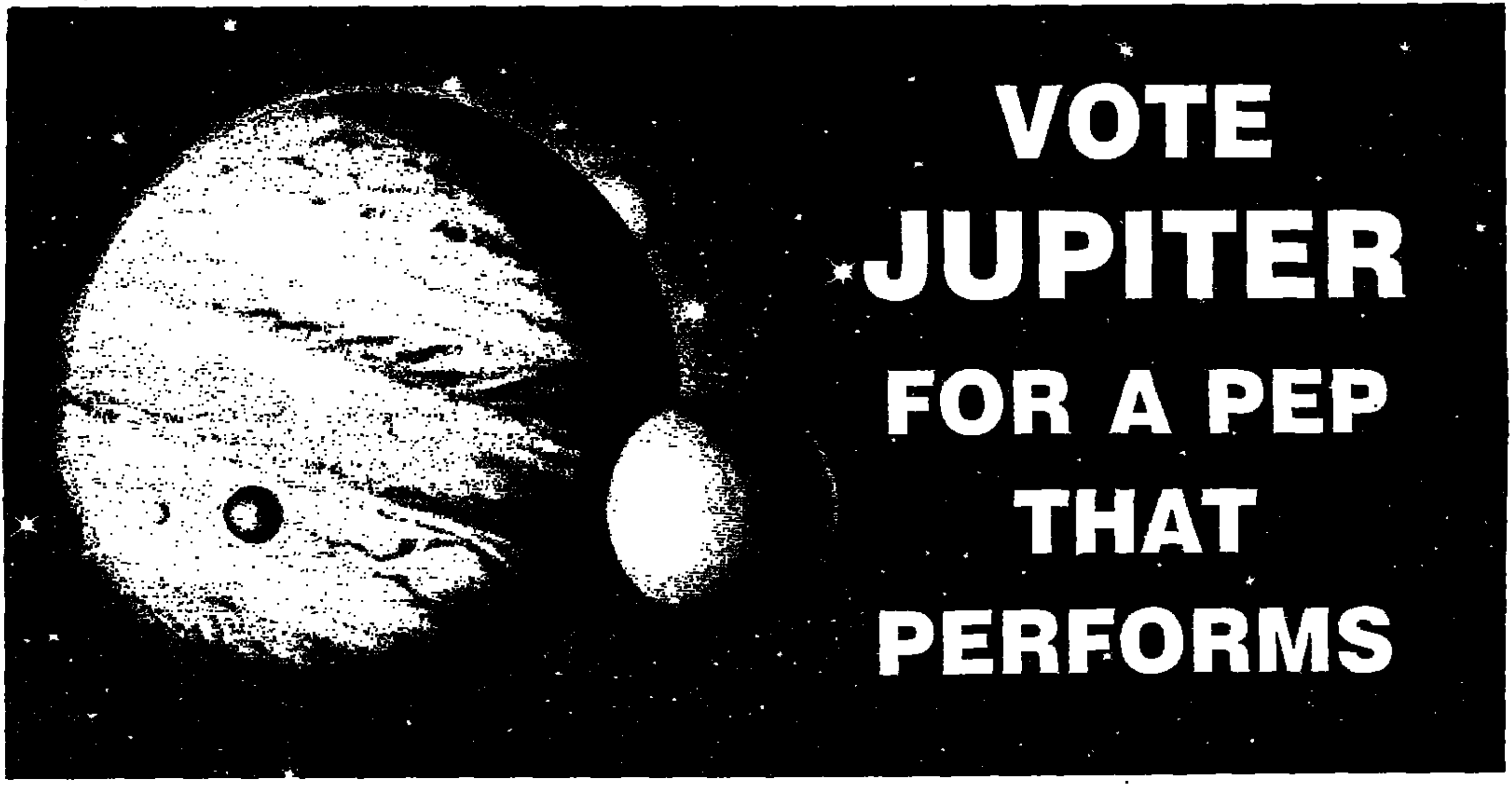

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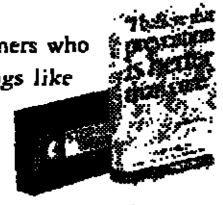

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Gavin Lumsden looks at the tricky business of picking the right emerging markets for your portfolio

Egypt is back on the investment map

Egypt has re-entered the public consciousness after the Oscar-winning exploits of *The English Patient*. However, watching the film, where a passionate love affair between two people is kindled against the backdrop of Cairo's famous bazaar, you'd have no idea that the country actually had the world's fifth-largest stock exchange at the start of the Second World War in 1939.

That Cairo hardly springs to mind when compiling a list of stock exchanges is largely down to President Nasser, who nationalised the largest companies in the 1960s. This is beginning to change. Last May the Government began a privatisation programme with 91 state companies going under the hammer this year.

Economic reforms are putting the country back on the investment map, joining the ranks of nearby Israel, Jordan and Morocco, as well as the diverse countries of Latin America, the Far East and eastern and central Europe, which all come under the banner of emerging markets.

These regions are now the undoubted powerhouses of the global economy, putting the more developed US and European markets in the shade. According to the Union Bank of Switzerland, the developing economies produce half of global GDP, a proportion which is forecast to grow to two thirds by the year 2020. Attracted by this "growth differential" it is not surprising to learn that investors have ploughed more than $230 billion into stocks and shares in emerging markets since the 1980s.

Despite the strength of the long-term trends, investors have not had an easy time in emerging markets. The Mexican peso crisis in 1994, in particular, dealt a body blow to the rest of Latin America and temporarily dragged down the other emerging markets with it. Overall returns have sagged since. As UBS points out, emerging markets have underperformed every other major asset class except Japan since 1985, and that country has provided thoroughly miserable returns.

So how can investors succeed in emerging markets? By dispelling the notion altogether, UBS suggests. In its latest *Guide to the Emerging Markets*, it has analysed 50 economies stretching from Argentina to Croatia, from the Philippines to Ukraine, and found them to be weakly correlated — that is, their behaviour has little to do with each other. Only in a Mexican-inspired meltdown do they move together — down. If investors want to exploit their potential for superior growth, they should concentrate on a few countries rather than spreading themselves across the whole lot. This is a "top-down" approach.

For instance, enlivening your portfolio of developed country shares with a 10 per cent holding in all emerging markets actually diminishes your return and increases the risk, UBS shows. But dividing that 10 per cent between the four largest emerging economies of Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico and South Africa gives the best returns and lowers risk as well. However, many believe Malaysia and South Africa, which are sophisticated markets, have outgrown their lot in the emerging category.

This goes against the grain of the usual "bottom up" approach to emerging markets, which is to focus on particular stocks. UBS says that fund managers who pick the worst stocks in the best markets will beat rivals who choose the best stocks in the worst markets, although there is not always much in it.

Last year Venezuela topped all emerging markets with 132 per cent growth, although its 10 worst stocks managed only 33 per cent. In contrast, Korea, last year's emerging dog, which fell back 39 per cent, had ten stocks that grew a creditable 30 per cent.

Richard Timberlake, investment director of Portfolio Fund Managers, which runs a unit trust investing in emerging market funds, prefers to steer a middle course between "top down" and "bottom up" styles.

Mr Timberlake said: "The problem with picking countries is that it is a lot more difficult than picking companies. Timing is crucial for selecting countries — there are exchange rates, macroeconomic factors and confidence to take into account. It is far easier to be scientific when analysing companies. When you do see a fundamental negative shift in countries you don't know when it will be reflected in the stock market."

He argues that the lack of correlation between emerging markets can help investors — when one country is down another may be up. Besides, he says, country selection has only had a marked effect in the past 18 months, when "it was essential to be in Hong Kong but out of Thailand and South Korea, which were absolute dogs".

Focusing closely could overlook growth opportunities. Far better to be diversified in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Hong Kong-China, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Czech Republic and Poland.

MIRAMAX

Bargain hunters: Kristin Scott Thomas and Ralph Fiennes in *The English Patient* visit the bazaar in Cairo, site of what used to be the world's fifth-largest stock exchange

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Fund managers keep their cool

The UK's biggest fund managers are not switching around their UK holdings because of the 150-point fall in the FT-SE 100 index of leading shares over the last month. The fall in share prices, following on from the decline in shares in the US, is not driving fund managers in to more defensive stocks or cash. Neither are they making significant portfolio changes because of the almost certain arrival of a Labour government.

The biggest effect of the drop in the index has been on those who left purchasing their personal equity plans (Peps) until the last moment at the end of the tax year on April 5. The managers report that Pep sales were subdued until the closing days of the year. Then it seemed many investors decided to buy. Some were undeterred by the fall in the index. Others were encouraged by the sight of tumbling share values.

Gartmore, for example, reported that it had experienced a slowdown in Pep sales at the beginning of the year. However, Lewis MacNaught, Gartmore managing director, said: "As we came up to the end of the year, lots more people started investing. We took £29 million in just a few days."

Over the last month the value of an average UK unit trust has fallen around 6 per cent. Over the last 12 months the value of an average unit trust rose 8 per cent.

Despite the likely arrival of the first Labour government for 18 years, the UK's big fund managers this week said they are not planning to change around their UK holdings entirely. None are about to move in to cash and many have been heartened by this week's pronouncements from the Labour Party about privatisation. To the surprise of many, Labour is no longer opposed, in theory, to privatisations and believes that some industries would fare better in private hands.

Bridget Cleverly, Schroder director, said: "As far as the general election is concerned, we are not intending to make many changes to the portfolios of our trusts. A Labour win has already been priced in to the stock market. We are underweight in utilities companies. As far as currency is concerned, sterling could go higher. We have cut back from being overweight in general industrial companies and have reduced our emphasis on exporters. We prefer leisure and food companies."

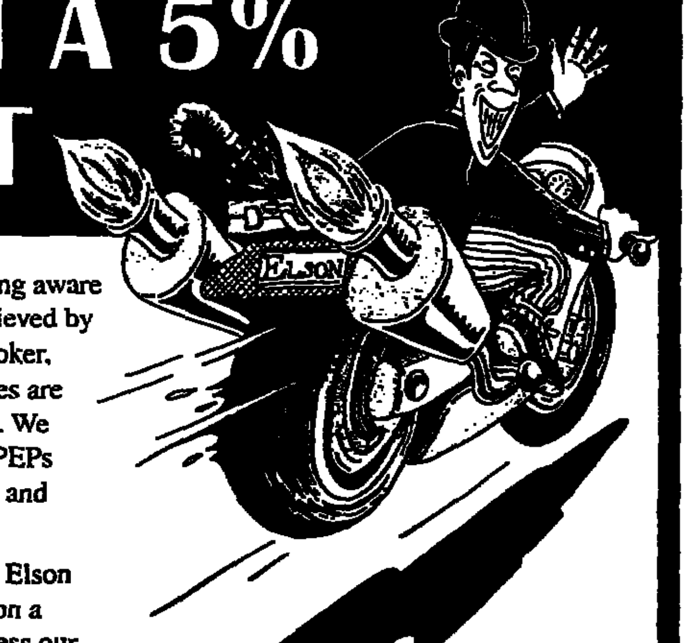
Stephen Whittaker, Perpetual's head of UK investment, said: "The Labour win has already been priced in to the market. Even the windfall tax on the utilities has already been factored in to the price."

Mr Whittaker believes that despite the almost certain rise in interest rates, banks and financial companies will produce good returns in the post-election environment. He said: "We also favour food retailers and pharmaceutical companies."

John Hatherly, M&G head of UK research, said: "We have not increased our 5 per cent weighting in cash because of the recent market falls. We believe that a Blair government has already been factored in to the price.

"There is almost certainly going to be an interest rate rise after the election whoever is in power. Interest rates are artificially being kept down until after the election. We expect rates to go up by up to 1 per cent."

CAROLINE MERRELL



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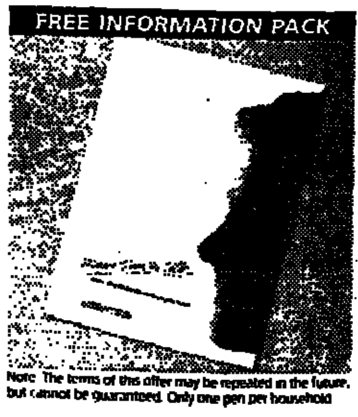

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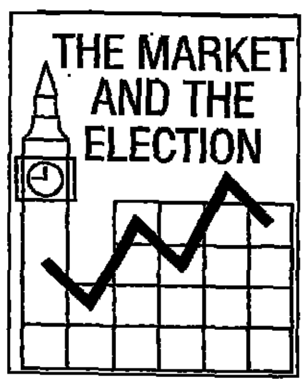
Matthew Wall on a topsy-turvy week

Campaigning in wonderland



MICHAEL POWELL

Martin Bell, whose anti-sleaze candidature exemplifies the bizarre tone of the election, with his daughter, Melissa

Maybe it is the influence of the Hale-Bopp comet but this election campaign has an Alice in Wonderland feel about it. Everything is topsy-turvy.

We are presented with the extraordinary situation of a Chancellor and his opposite number appearing to be more pro-European than the Foreign Secretary *and his opposite number, and where a* former BBC war correspondent is standing as an unlikely anti-sleaze candidate against an MP mired in the "cash-for-questions" scandal.

Meanwhile, the Institute of Fiscal Studies tells us, with a Carrollian flair for paradox, that although the overall burden of taxation has gone up since the last election, the average family is actually *better off thanks to* rising incomes.

The Tories tells us Britain is booming — last week's record consumer credit figures seem to bear this out — and yet this week's manufacturing output figures showing a mere 0.2 per cent growth in February, seem to tell a different story.

This week's opinion polls are no less confusing. A MORI poll for *The Times* has Labour's lead over the Tories cut to 15 percentage points, whereas a Gallup poll for *The Daily Telegraph* has Labour 23 *percentage points ahead. The voters, it* seems, are just as volatile as the markets, which continue to behave erratically.

The FT-SE 100 index edged slightly higher this week, closing at 4,313.2 on Thursday. It fell to 4,270.7 on Friday, down 42.5, under the influence of New York. The Dow had recovered to finish *on Thursday at 6,540.05. Its decline on* Friday was attributed to news of robust retail sales which had awakenened fears of higher interest rates.

Comparative figures from Data*stream/ICV show that in this election the* market is behaving broadly as it did during the 1992 campaign, with share prices falling and trading volumes depressed in the run-up to polling day. But *there the similarity ends.*

In 1992 the City feared a Labour victory that was being predicted by the polls. So when the Tories won the *FT-SE soared instantly by over 150* points. This time, the City is resigned to a Labour victory in the knowledge that Tony Blair's party is a far cry from Neil Kinnock's. The market volatility in this campaign has more to do with Wall Street.

This week saw the Labour Party, supposedly more pro-Europe than the Tories, appearing — should it win power — to rule out joining a European single currency in the lifetime of the next Parliament. The City had welcomed Labour's apparently pro-European stance since it sees the European convergence criteria of low inflation and low interest rates as prerequisites for strong domestic economic growth. Labour, it is believed, would be good for the UK bond markets. But this week's more sceptical *noises have muddied the waters.*

Gilt-edged prices have fallen by nearly 10 per cent since February 18, with yields on ten-year gilts rising from a low of 7.09 per cent to 7.63 per cent now.

*Although this seems to indicate re*newed City fears of rising inflation under a Labour government, Mark Capleton, international bond strategist at BZW, the merchant bank, said: "The downward *move in gilt prices is largely due to the* US Treasury market, where yields on ten-year Treasuries have risen from 6.28 per cent to 6.91 per cent."

He added: "We have had a series of *robust US economic data since February* and this tipped the balance towards interest rate rises by the US Federal Reserve. Its 0.25 per cent rate increase is certain to be followed by others and this is making the bond and equity markets jittery."

As inflation is the bond market's mortal enemy, you would have thought that increasing interest rates to tackle inflation would be welcomed. But as short-term interest rates rise, so does the cost of borrowing for companies and their customers. Profits are put under pressure and this affects the sentiment on Wall Street.

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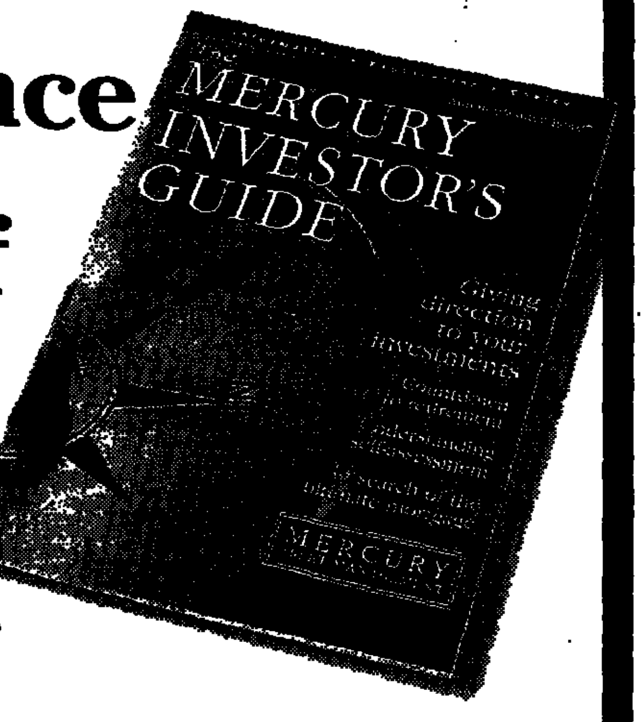

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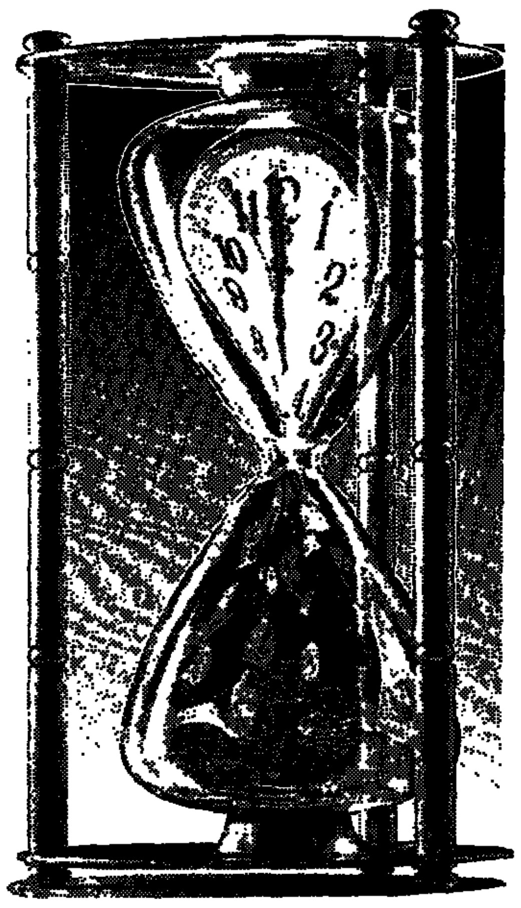

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Karen Zagor reports on some confusion over the Bristol & West acquisition

A shared preference for clarity

ANGLIA PRESS

Undecided: Margaret and David Crerar, who have been seeking clarification on the Bristol & West shares offer

SOCIETY WATCH

As members of the Bristol & West prepare for Tuesday's vote on the society's planned acquisition by the Bank of Ireland, some may find themselves perplexed by what they are being offered — like David and Margaret Crerar.

Under the terms of the deal, eligible two-year investing Bristol & West members who had £100 in their accounts on the requisite dates will receive a cash bonus of more than £1,100. Savers who did not *meet the £100 requirement but* who topped up their accounts in time, will get £250 in cash. Borrowers, and those savers who do not qualify for a cash bonus, will get at least 250 in preference shares. The preference shares are expected to be valued at £1 a share, and will carry a dividend.

If the takeover goes ahead, *Bristol & West will become* Bristol & West plc, which will be wholly-owned by the Bank *of Ireland and listed on the* London Stock Exchange. This has led to Mr Crerar's question: "*If the new company is to* be a wholly-owned subsidiary how can they issue shares in the new company to current shareholders? Surely, Bristol & West ceases to be wholly-owned in that case."

Mr Crerar has written twice to the society without receiving a satisfactory response. The answer, however, is simple and has more to do with the nature of preference shares than the structure of the deal. *Preference shares fall some*where between ordinary shares and corporate bonds or debt. Ordinary shares are a share in the ownership of the company. Anyone who has more than 50 per cent of the outstanding ordinary shares in a company becomes a majority shareholder with controlling rights.

Preference shares confer no such ownership rights but pay a guaranteed dividend which *is not linked to profitability* and, in the event of a company failure, preference shareholders are paid *out first*.

Members who have not already sent in their completed voting forms can vote in person at the special general meeting April 15. Bristol & West needs the support of at least half of its eligible members, of whom at least 75 per cent must approve the deal.

Bad news for bonus-hunting small investors

In a week when the Bristol & West and Northern Rock are *both holding* special meetings — the former to vote on merger, the latter to vote on plans to convert to a listed company — bonus-hunters *may be* looking for a new home for their money in the hope of receiving another building society windfall (Karen Zagor writes).

Alastair McArthur, an 18-year-old student, currently has £1,500 in a National *Savings Investment* account and wants to know which societies may float in the next year or so.

The bad news for Mr McArthur and other windfall hunters is that the stampede to merge or convert has probably ended. Furthermore, in an attempt to deter bounty-hunters, *many societies* have raised the lower limits for accounts that confer member*ship status*. And societies are not necessarily offering the best rates on the market.

A National *Savings* Investment account will currently pay 5.25 per cent gross on amounts between £500 and £25,000. According to research by MoneyFacts, Mr McArthur would have to go to Sainsbury's Bank, which is paying 5.75 per cent on any amount over £1, to beat that rate. For Mr McArthur, and other non-taxpayers, one advantage of remaining with National Savings is that the interest is paid gross. *With bank and build*ing society savings accounts, 20 per cent tax is taken at source unless the saver fills out a form to *receive the income gross*.

If Mr McArthur wants to gamble and accept a lower rate *in the short term in the* hopes of long-term profitability, he could shop around for the best deals from one of the remaining *societies*. Although their rates may not match Sainsbury's, which is new to the savings scene and *trying to* build a customer base, there are some reasonable rates on offer.

Building society rates started to improve last year, when the societies realised the needed to give members evidence of the benefits of mutuality. Bradford & Bingley, for example, now *offers savings rates on aver*age, 0.5 percentage points higher than itscompetitors. On £1,500, a B&B instant-access account will pay 3.1 per cent, a one-year bond 5.35 per cent, *an instant*-access postal account 4.8 per cent and a 30-day notice postal account 5.1 per cent.

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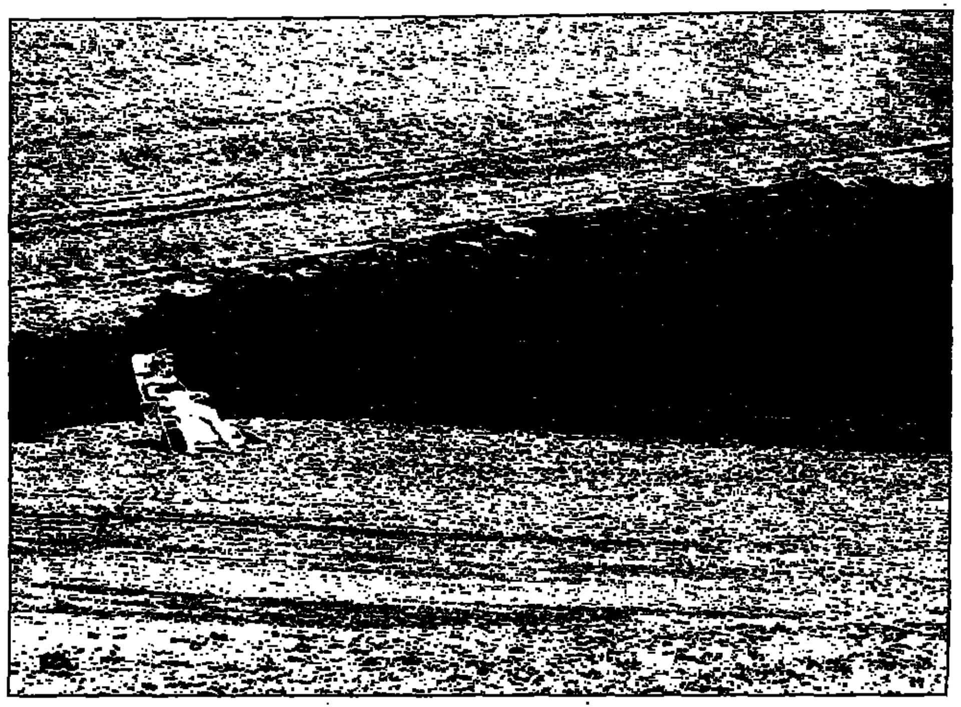
Drought cover fears hit home sales



Home buyers whose new property has a history of subsidence from the past two years of dry summers, are being left high and dry by insurers who have previously covered the property *but who are refusing to* continue once the new owner takes possession. Sales are *collapsing because buyers* cannot find cover elsewhere.

Such refusals fly in the face of an insurance industry convention that the existing insurer continues to offer cover on properties which have been underpinned or have other problems. This is meant to protect homeowners who would otherwise face rejection from other insurers and be unable to buy because lenders insist on buildings insurance.

Robert Hooker, of the Subsidence Claims Advisory Bureau, which advises on subsid*ence claims, said the bureau* was being approached by morebuyers as the property market continues to pick up. He said: "We have a lot of desperate callers who want to exchange but cannot get insurance. Companies will meet claims and pay for repairs but won't accept new business when there is a new owner." Mr Hooker, added many insurers are guilty of refusing to continue cover. "It is a form of *risk management*."

The problem is particularly acute in London and the South *East, which is among the most* subsidence-prone areas in the country and which is also experiencing the most buoyant property markets.

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) said there was nothing to compel its members to continue offering cover. Buyers could usually find insurance elsewhere, although they might have to pay higher premiums for it, said the ABI.

Insurers contacted by *The Times deny that they refuse* cover to new owners of subsidence-affected properties. But *David Neave, household busi*ness manager at Royal Sun Alliance said: "Normally buyers would arrange a policy through a lender. We would prefer to see the new lender take on the risk. But if we have paid for a property to be underpinned, we cannot be seen to wash our hands of it."

Norwich Union said: "If we've repaired the house we're happy to continue covering it. Otherwise the customer would *be left in the lurch*". One buyer of a house whose survey had uncovered cracks had drawn a *blank on insurance cover ev*erywhere until he approached Norwich Union which already insured the property and agreed to continue, it said.

SARA MCCONNELL AND NATHAN YATES

Predators already on the trail of NU

In less than a week, Norwich Union's 2.9 million eligible members will *have voted on the mutual's* plans to become a quoted company worth between £3 billion and £4 billion, depending on market conditions.

Most will have cast their vote by post, but up to one thousand are expected to turn up at the London Arena next Friday to vote in person.

When NU comes to the stock market this summer policyholders will each enjoy an average £800 windfall, but there are many City observers who are sceptical about the mutual life insurer's ability to remain independently quoted.

Some even predict NU will be taken over before it gets to *market. This could mean even* bigger payouts for qualifying policyholders because the *predator would need to offer* them an attractive alternative.

As the UK's second-largest *mutual* insurance company after Standard Life, with £40 billion in funds under management and £4.7 billion of worldwide gross premium in 1995. NU would be a good long-term investment for many predators.

Its flotation price will give it a value similar to Legal & General, but smaller than Prudential or Commercial Union.

There are plenty of companies, *including a number of* continental insurers, which have the size and the cash available to buy it, but *they* will probably have to pay up to £5 billion for it.

Meanwhile, speculators are now looking at the future of NPI, the mutual pension provider which *this* week announced that Alastair Lyons, formerly of the Abbey National, would be joining it as chief executive.

Mr Lyons was chief executive of the N&P when it was taken over by Abbey last year, and his appointment has fuelled speculation that NPI, whose performance has been constrained recently by a lack of access to capital, may soon succumb to a takeover bid.

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Sara McConnell on a case of maladministration

The pension that shrank

Is it safe to assume that you have been given the right information from your company when you are trying to review your pension arrangements? Not necessarily. But if you have been told the wrong thing and believe you have lost out as a consequence, do you have any comeback? Unfortunately, probably not.

Alan Bowen, a Weekend Money reader, is an accountant by profession and likes to review his pension position regularly, generally when he moves jobs. He relies on information from employers to decide whether to leave his pension invested or transfer it. Wrongly, as he discovered.

"I worked for a company from April 1985 until September 1987. On leaving I received a letter from the company telling me that I had certain options regarding my company pension. [The options were to leave the pension where it was, transfer it to a new employer's scheme, or transfer it to a personal pension]. I decided that in the circumstances it was beneficial to leave it with the company and my new employer contributed to an executive personal pension scheme on my behalf.

"In 1991 I changed jobs again and asked for a transfer value for my frozen pension with the first company. They sent me a transfer form showing a transfer value of £6,574 or an annual pension of £5,499. In 1996, I asked for another transfer value because I changed jobs again and they gave me a transfer value of £4,891, or an annual pension of £2,059.

"I pointed out that over time the figures should increase, not decrease. They replied by telling me the 1991 figures were a mistake. I had requested the transfer values because I felt it was appropriate to review my pension. The 1991 information led me to believe that the current position was fine, that the funds were best left with the company and I did not need to make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to top up my pension and cover any shortfall. But now I feel I should have been paying AVCs from early 1991.

PAUL COUSANS

Miscalculated: Alan Bowen's transfer value fell in five years

The company has apologised and seems to think this is sufficient. But it cannot be right that large employers can promise people one thing and then withdraw it. The company's information caused me to take an inappropriate course of action and I can never recover six lost years of AVCs."

Weekend Money replies: "The company has admitted to you that it made an administrative error when you first asked for a transfer value in 1989. The wrong (higher) figure was written on the transfer form and keyed into the computer, overriding and recalculating the original benefits. Staff who calculated your value at the time had wrongly indexed it by 5 per cent a year when there should not have been any increase at all. This threw out calculations in 1991 and the mistake was not discovered until you queried it last year. The company says it would have caught the mistake in 1991 if you had actually wanted to take the transfer value.

The problem is that legally you have few grounds for redress. According to Penny Green, chief executive of the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (Opas), the charity which gives free advice on occupational pensions, you have not suffered an actual loss, only a disappointment. As your pension from the company will be based on your final salary with the company, you will still get the value of your pension.

A transfer value is not the same as a fund value. It is simply the result of an actuarial calculation of what cash sum, invested today, will be enough to buy you your pension on retirement. Transfer values change depending on factors like interest rates, inflation and the value of the underlying funds.

Ms Green suggests you might be able to lodge a claim for distress and inconvenience on grounds of maladministration. OPAS is the first port of call for such complaints about occupational pension schemes, so contact it on 0171-233 8080. If it cannot solve your case, it will pass it to the Pensions Ombudsman.

Election adds new dimension to annuity see-saw quandary

The launch of the Government's privatisation plans last month means that pensions of the future have become a political battleground in the run-up to the general election. But the possiblity of a change in annuity rates means that May 1 could also have an effect on pensions in the shorter term.

The City is predicting that interest rates could rise by as much as 0.5 per cent after polling day, and that this could mean an improvement in annuity deals. This possibility is troubling Walter Toubkin, a reader of Weekend Money.

Mr Toubkin holds a personal pension plan which has already matured, and Inland Revenue regulations mean that he has until June to buy his annuity. "I've been told I might get a better deal after the election," he said. "Is it worth me holding on?"

Weekend Money replies: Pension fund holders buying annuities in the next few months are faced with the classic problem of the annuity see-saw. Before the election interest rates are likely to remain low, and the stock market should be relatively buoyant, so your pension fund ought to be healthy and you will have plenty of annuity buying power. But low interest rates also mean that many annuity deals are now poor.

After polling day, a rise in interest rates is likely whichever party wins. This could mean an improvement in annuity rates, but it could also result in a stock market fall and a decrease in the value of your pension fund, which would reduce the size of annuity you could buy. Any gains made through obtaining a better annuity rate may be offset by this loss in buying potential.

The possible election see-saw in which annuity rates and the value of pension funds balance out each other may seem to offer a no-win situation. But, as William Sallitt of the Annuity Bureau, the independent annuity specialist, explained, there is one way you could make the most of polling day changes. "If interest rates are likely to rise and you are buying an annuity in the near future, it could make sense to withdraw your pension money and place it in a secure cash fund for a few months," he said.

"All those with unit-linked policies are able to do this, and using this method you can make sure you lose no buying power if the market falls," he added. "If annuity rates then rise you are able to take full advantage — it is a way of exploiting both sides of the annuity see-saw."

But be warned that annuity market fluctuations are notoriously difficult to predict, and other factors beside interest rates could affect the value of your pension fund. However, if there is a post-election rise of 0.5 per cent in interest rates and all else goes according to plan, securing your capital in a cash fund and waiting until after May 1 before buying could reap you more than 5 per cent a year extra income, according to some insurers.

Annuity rates vary widely and the wrong choice could cut your annual income by thousands of pounds for the rest of your life. The insurance company that has been running your pension does not necessarily offer the best annuity and you have the right to take your fund to another insurer offering better rates.

Currently returns from the companies listed by Annuity Bureau on an annuity of £75,000 range from £6,550 per year from Scottish Amicable to £8,049 at Stalwart Assurance, and choosing the more competitive option would make a difference of £14,990 after ten years.

Annuity rates .... page 42

"Selecting where to buy your annuity and timing your purchase can make a large difference to your income levels," Mr Sallitt said. "Many people make careful decisions when it comes to choosing a pension plan, but the importance of annuity choices is less well known, and it is time that the public became more aware."

NATHAN YATES

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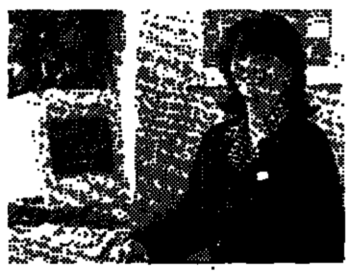

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* Source: Micropal Ltd. buying price to selling price, from 1.3.91-17.3.97, the UK Stockmarket Fund grew by 120.79% with income re-invested (an annualised growth rate of 14%). † 1% discount on the buying price applies until 30.4.97.

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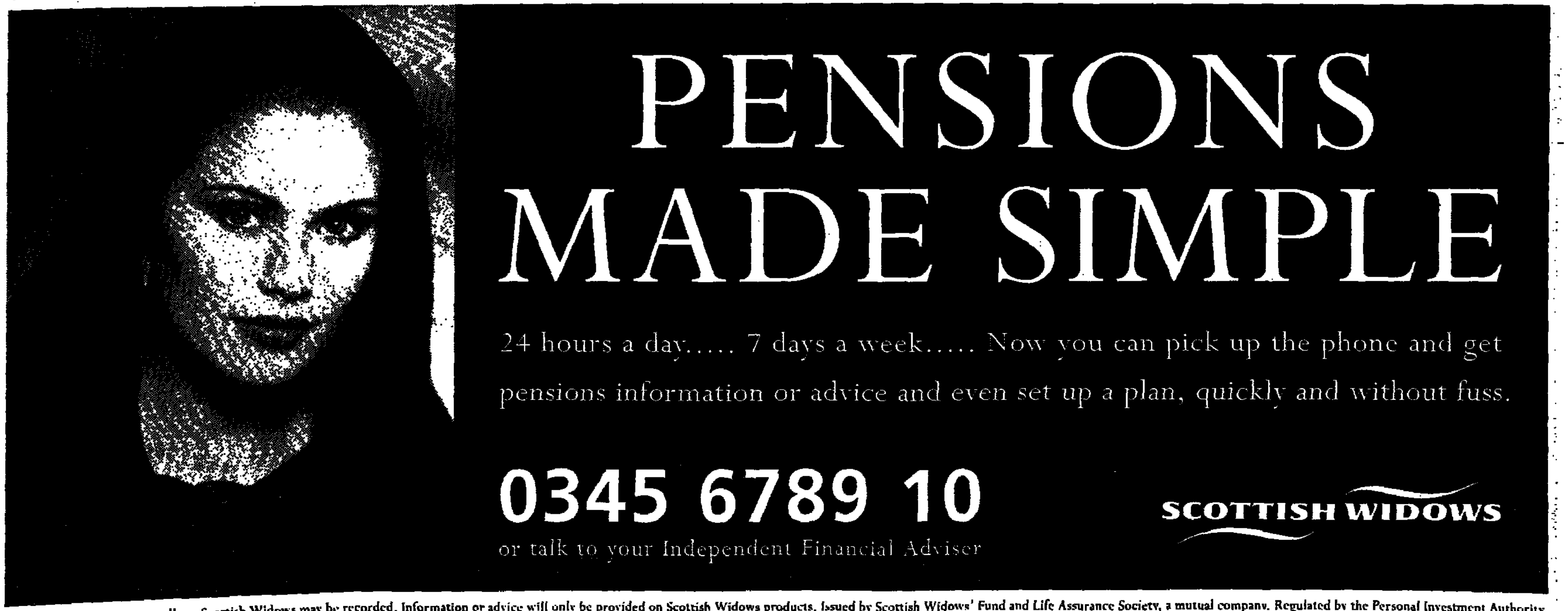

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Pension recipe lands chef in the soup

JEREMY YOUNG

Schemes designed to sidestep UK rules on buying annuities with the proceeds of pension funds are being offered to potential customers by a Sussex company. Knightsbridge International Tax Consultants claims customers can receive 90 per cent of their pension fund tax free, after setting up loan arrangements abroad.

Its claims have emerged days after the High Court endorsed a Revenue decision to impose heavy penalties on star chef Michel Roux, of the Waterside Inn, who had attempted to avoid having to use his fund to buy an annuity. Under UK pension rules, 75 per cent of a pension fund must be used to buy an annuity, which pays a taxable income for life. Only 25 per cent can be taken tax free. This causes resentment among those who feel annuity rates give poor value.

Mr Roux had transferred £900,000 from his company scheme into a new fund offshore. The scheme was unapproved, which meant it did not qualify for tax breaks and would not be bound by Revenue rules on annuities. But the Revenue decided the transfer amounted to tax avoidance and removed approval from the old scheme, leaving M Roux with an estimated £400,000 tax bill.

But companies like Knightsbridge International say they intend to continue marketing annuity avoidance schemes until there is a change in the law.

Knightsbridge is a marketing agent for four advisers offering schemes. One involves setting up a new plan with the proceeds of an existing one, using it to buy a deferred annuity in Europe then taking a tax free loan for 90 per cent of the fund on the security of the annuity. Income from the fund can also be drawn tax free, it claims.

SARA MCCONNELL

Regulations tightened

Sara McConnell on new rules for company plans

Tighter rules to protect members of company pension schemes from dishonest employers took effect this week, ending years of professional complacency.

The Government was forced to act after Robert Maxwell's theft of £450 million from his employees' pension funds came to light in 1991..

Pension professionals had to acknowledge that members of company schemes had next to no protection against the risk of their funds being appropriated by their employer, who, with smaller companies, often doubled as scheme trustee.

Another problem with occupational schemes was illustrated this week in a case involving the pension scheme of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux. The collapse of the 130-member scheme leaving members underfunded for their pensions has forced CAB in to taking legal actionagainst a financial adviser that administered the scheme , Cheltenham-based Bruce & Partners, to try to get compensation. The pension scheme is one of several thousand former Crown Financial Management schemes that are currently in the process of being wound up. The pensions ombudsman is investigating.

The new Pensions Act puts in place a raft of regulations on rights and duties of employers, trustees, advisers and members. Some believe that it is overkill. Robin Ellison, of Eversheds, the solicitors, calls the Act a "whingers' charter" and sees many of its requirements for information as unnecessary. The real concerns should be pension fund performance, expenses, and monitoring of wound-up funds, he said.

How will the Act affect you?

■ The Act covers an estimated 200,000 schemes. These include most private sector schemes paying benefits based on salary (defined benefits) or on contributions (defined contribution or money purchase) and which are set up under trust. It excludes group personal pensions, which are regulated like personal pensions (see below), and unfunded public sector schemes which have government guarantees. Schemes with fewer than 12 members in which each is a trustee (small self administered schemes for example) are excluded.

■ If your scheme is covered by the Act, you should have received, or soon receive, details of your employer's internal disputes procedure. This should say who to contact if there is a complaint, and include a checklist of dates by which you should expect to receive specified information. It is a breach of the Act not to supply information about internal dispute procedures.

■ You should have been told about arrangements for electing trustees. Under the Act, a third of trustees must be scheme members. However, controversially, employers can propose to bypass this requirement, and, unless 10 per cent of employees object in a ballot, can impose their preferred arrangement. Keep an eye on office noticeboards and read mail from your pension department. Trustee selection must be started by May 7.

■ If there is no sign of activity on the above two points by next month, ask the trustees what is happening. If you do not get a satisfactory answer, tell the new Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra, on 01273 627648), which regulates all schemes under the Act, and can discipline them.

An alternative is to ask the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (Opas, on 0171-233 8080), which may be able to advise you.

■ You remain entitled to annual benefit statements, and will now be able to receive, on request, the scheme accounts, the actuarial report and a statement of investment principles. This will set out who makes investment decisions, who the advisers are, the terms on which they act, and target investment performance. This will also tell you whether the scheme assets meet liabilities. The Act's tough funding rules require schemes to be 100 per cent solvent, or to say how they will remedy any shortfall.

■ It is now a crime for employers to deduct pension contributions from pay and not credit them to the pension within 19 days. Employers must also not delay paying pensions by more than two days.

■ Any pension benefits you earn after April 6, when the Act came into force, must be uprated annually in line with prices or by 5 per cent, whichever is less. So, all occupational pensions will gradually become indexed.

■ Opra will monitor occupational pension schemes and act if problems arise. It will not make regular inspections, but will react to claims of misdemeanours. Opas and the pensions ombudsman will continue to handle complaints.

■ The occupational pension compensation scheme, funded by a levy on schemes, will pay out up to 90 per cent of losses, but only if an employer is insolvent and committed "any offence causing dishonesty". The Pensions Compensation Board (0171-828 9794) says this definition is not limited to criminal offences. There need not be a prosecution, only grounds for believing that there has been dishonesty. The scheme will pay out only on loss sustained after April 6 1997.

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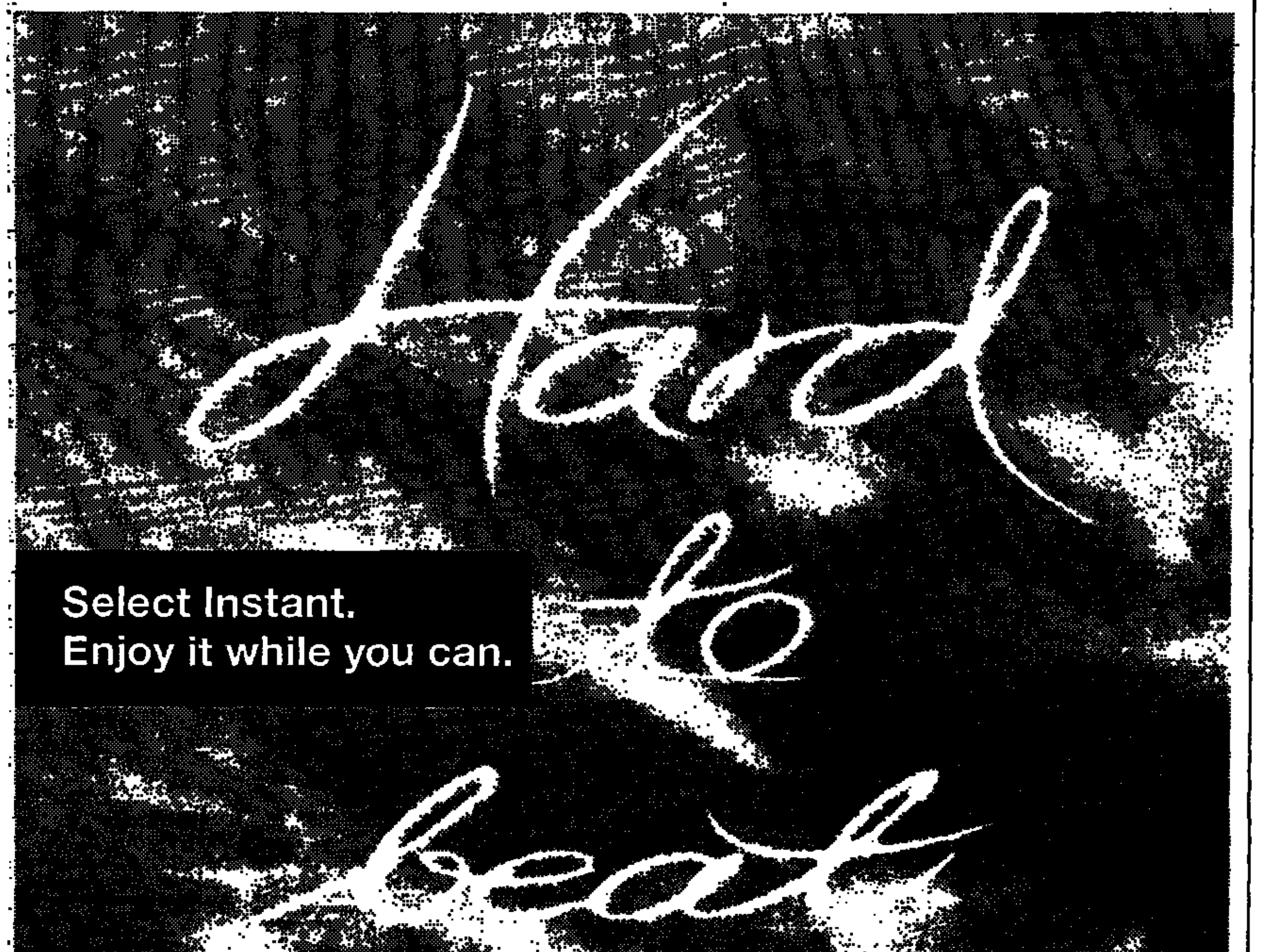
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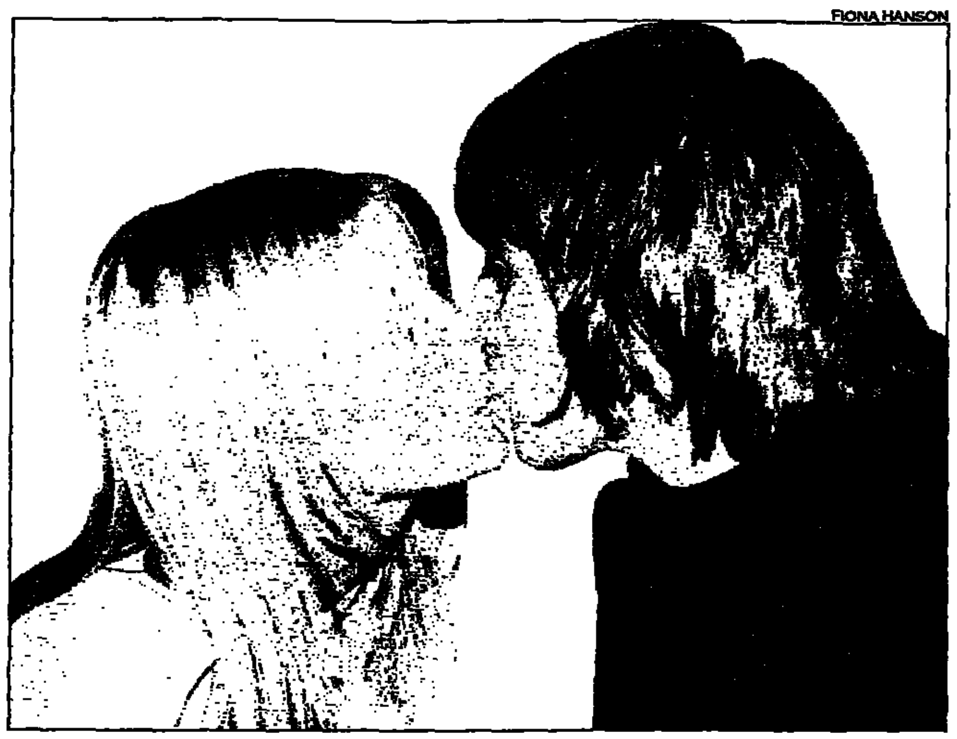
Grasp the nettle early

Tony Foreman says the new self-assessment form is different but not difficult to understand

FIONA HANSON



Even newlyweds Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit cannot escape self-assessment

The first self-assessment (SA) tax forms were dispatched this week to the eight million individuals affected by the new system.

SA, the largest single reform of income tax since its introduction in 1798, will bring big changes for the self-employed and higher-rate taxpayers. If you have already received your form and are suffering a severe shock at its complexities and at the severe penalties you will face for inaccuracies or delays, read our guide to surviving SA.

SA requires that you carry out certain tasks by fixed deadlines. If you fail to deal with your tax affairs *in a business-like way, you will be* charged interest and surcharges and possibly worse. The second thing to note is that the new-style tax return may *be unfamiliar but is not as* difficult as it may seem. A trial carried out in Leicester over the past two years showed that 50 per cent of returns contained clerical errors which needed correction, such as *arithmetical mistakes*, figures entered in the wrong column, etc.

The standard eight-page return may need to be supplemented by additional schedules so this is probably your first task: to see if you have the extra schedules needed.

SA makes no difference to independent taxation, where a *husband and wife's tax affairs* are treated separately. This means newlyweds Liam and Patsy will have to get to grips with its complexities in the same way as any other married couple.

You should note that the Inland Revenue has powers enabling them to check up. Tax officials will be using these powers and will not find it amusing if you are audited and found wanting.

■ Get organised. Start to collect the information that you will need (see summary).

■ Do not throw anything away. You should keep your records until January 31, 1999–January 31, 2003, if you run a business or receive rental income. The Revenue policy on SA is "Process now, check later". The Revenue will be *able to open an inquiry into* your 1996-97 return by serving a notice before February 1, 1999, and will not have to justify doing so.

■ Do not leave everything to the last minute. There will be an automatic £100 penalty for filing your return late and, while January 31, 1998, is a long way off, it will be easier to tackle the return whilst things are fresh in your mind. If there *are any gaps in your records* — you have been under a legal obligation to keep adequate records since April 6, 1996 — you may be able to reconstruct *them by getting down to the* task before the trail goes completely cold.

■ Do not send in an incomplete return; it will only be *rejected. If you had benefits in* kind such as a company car or a mobile telephone, you will need to put down a figure for your taxable benefit, just reporting "per form *P11D*" or "as PAYE" is not acceptable.

■ Start to put cash aside now so that you can settle your 1996-97 tax and make a payment on *account* for 1997-98 next January 31. If you are short of funds after Christmas you may find yourself exposed to interest. The APR is current*ly 8.5 per cent. Worse still*, if you are not able to clear your 1996-97 tax by February 28, you will be liable for an automatic 5 per cent surcharge *equal to an APR of 60 per cent.*

■ Consider filing by September 30. Somerset House has given repeated assurances that filing early will not in*crease the likelihood of your* return being selected for inquiry. On a positive note, the Revenue will collect underpayments of up to £1,000 via the PAYE *system if you submit* your return by September.

■ Work on the basis that your return will be selected for inquiry. The Revenue will be selecting 10,000 returns each year on a random basis. Tax offices are also expected to check another 30,000 returns.

■ Remember to tick the box if your return contains any estimated or provisional figures. It will probably be in your own best interests to give an explanation of how you have arrived at the figures as this may preempt Revenue queries. It may *also afford a degree of protec*tion against the Revenue coming back after January 31, 1999, and reopening 1996-97 by making a "discovery" assessment.

■ Get professional advice if your affairs are complicated.

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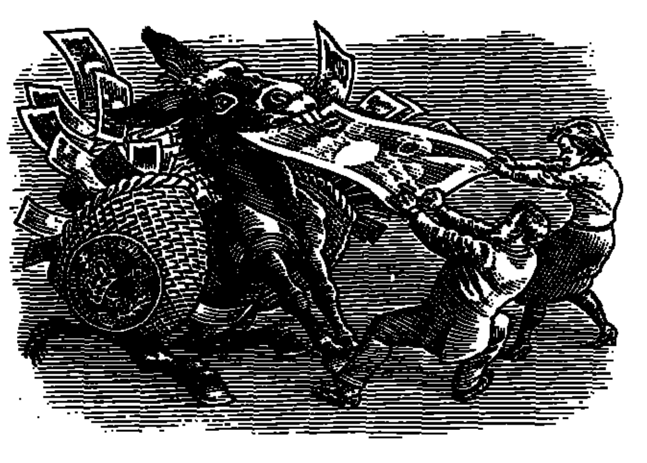

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Taxable figures for any benefits in kind, company car, mobile phone, cheap loans in excess of £5,000 from your current employer.

Details of amounts paid to you under the Fixed Profit Car *Scheme for using your own* car for company business.

(If you changed jobs during the year ended 5 April 1997) details of any of these benefits that were provided by your previous employer.

Advice from your employer as to what to report if you received free shares or exercised or were given a share option in 1996-97.

SELF-EMPLOYED

You will need to prepare acc*ounts or have an accountant* do them for you. The Revenue requires your details in a set format so it can use its computer to identify cases to be taken up for inquiry.

RENTAL INCOME

You should keep an analysis of rents receiveable for 1996-97 *and a note of* any bad debts, details of expenditure such as fees to managing agents, repair bills and re-decoration, replacement of electrical goods and furniture for the properties concerned. If you borrowed to fund your property business, the interest should be an allowable expense.

SAVINGS INCOME

You keep a copy of your bank deposit account statements, building society passbook and dividend vouchers.

TRUST INCOME

You need form R185 which sets out the income paid to you and tax deducted at source.

CAPITAL GAINS

You will need the broker's contract notes for share sales and copies of the sale contract and completion statement if you have sold any properties. If you gave assets to your children you may be liable for CGT as if you had sold at market value, so seek advice.

Tony Foreman, partner at the accountants Pannell Kerr Forster, is author of The Allied Dunbar Tax Handbook 1997-98, published by Pitman Publishing £25.99.

READING LIST

Kidson Impey chartered accountants: *Self Assessment*, 0171 334 4778.

NatWest Investment's *Self Assessment, Understanding the New Tax System:* 0800 200 400.

Guardian Direct's *A Guide to Tax Self Assessment:* 0500 28 28 20.

Menzies Chartered Accountants' *Self Assessment, A Summary:* 01483 755000.

Sun Life of Canada's *Guide to Self Assessment:* 01256 303 204.

The Tax Team's *No More Tax Problems:* 0800 393 520.

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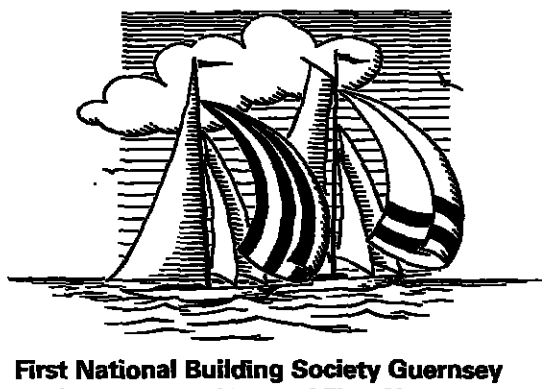

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Balance	Annual % Gross	Monthly Interest % Gross	Monthly Interest % Gross CAR
£250,000 +	6.75%	6.55%	6.75%
£100,000 +	6.70%	6.50%	6.70%
£50,000 +	6.60%	6.41%	6.60%
£25,000 +	6.55%	6.36%	6.55%
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TAX SELF-ASSESSMENT SPECIAL REPORT

Keep it neat and tidy

Diana Miller

examines boxes and booklets, software and systems to aid the DIY Taxman

WARNER PATHE

Organise now for self assessment to ensure many happy returns for years to come. Book and software publishers, financial advisers and accountants have all brought out products to make life easier for DIY taxpayers. These include:

■ *Guildhall Account Box*, by Tollit & Harvey, has cards for simple record keeping and pockets for paperwork. Price: £15.29 (excl.VAT). Available from all good stationery shops.

■ *The Record Set* at £7.50 from Twinlock, contains ten pre-printed tax folders allowing the user to record information and store documentation. *The Organiser* at £12.99 is a large capacity ring binder with a set of pre-printed tax guide sections and 20 storage *pockets for documentation. The Complete Filing System*, costs £19.99 and has pre-printed A4 guide files and a set of tabs and inserts along with a black portable storage case. Available from Rymans or WH Smith.

■ *Tax Tracker Self-Assessment Organiser* at £18.99 from William Clowes has a diary with a simple ledger enabling the self-employed to note all meetings and appointments alongside a record of daily financial transactions — income, expenses, expenditure on materials, and motor travel. (Call: 0800 393 318).

■ *Check Your Tax and Money Facts*, by Graham Kitchen, published by Foulsham. An easy guide to filling in tax returns and self assessment forms, with help for those who wish to check their PAYE. £5.99.

■ *Lloyds Bank Tax Guide 1997-98*, by Sara Williams and John William has a basic introduction to the new system then goes through the 100 boxes of the self-assessment form and supplementary pages. Published by Profile Books Ltd, priced £7.99.

■ *Ernst & Young's Tax Saver's Companion 1997/98*, published by John Wiley & Sons has general tax advice and a self-assessment section: £12.99.

■ *Which? Way to Save Tax*, £14.99, explains the tax rules and shows how best to use them. Call 0800 252100.

■ *Tolley's Self-Assessment 1996-7*, £43.95, has examples of basic queries and complex points which may arise when filling in self-assessment forms. Call: 0181 6869141.

Those with personal computers, can buy personal finance software such as *Intuit Quicken* or *Microsoft Money* to computerise their ledger. Intuit is also producing an updated version of its QuickTax software for self assessment. (Call: 01932 578 500). The Revenue's own disk contains an electronic version of the self-assessment *forms* and a calculator. (Call 0645 000 404).

■ *TaxCalc*. £29.99 from Which? is probably the best known tax software on the UK market. It moves users through data calculation and gives what-if scenarios such as *how* much you would save by returning the company car. It also allows you to print a ready-to-send self assessment form. (Call: 0800 252 100)

■ *Europress' Mini Office Tax*, £29.99, is updated for self assessment. It has "wizards" that ask the user to answer a series of questions then automatically updates the electronic self-assessment form. (Call: 01625 859 333).

■ *SmartTax*, from Mysterious Pursuit International, is a modular program that can be *downloaded from the Internet* direct to a PC by going to www.smarttax.co.uk. There you can download free *SmartTax Lite*, which has the self assessment form and its notes, and a calculator. There are also four £5 modules to download. Or you can buy the lot on diskettes for £24.95. The first is the Work Sheets and Schedules where you enter figures in basic worksheets and SmartTax transfers them to the official forms. The second, the Interview, asks questions in the same way a tax professional might. The Tools module has an analyser to examine the tax effect of different scenarios, an enhanced tax calculator and a cash book linker to import your figures from *Microsoft Money* or *Intuit Quicken* without rekeying them. The last module is the Electronic Lodging Service to send your return to SmartTax, and thence to the Revenue. (Call: 0181 905 3786)

■ www.tax.org.uk, the Chartered Institute of Taxation's *World Wide Web site has* a section on tax for beginners, and will include a free cut-down version of the Which? tax software to calculate your tax on-line. It also has links to "all the essential UK tax sites."

■ *Portfolio*. Taxpayers facing capital gains tax can use Infotrade's personal finance software at www.infotrade.co.uk to calculate their CGT.

£200,000 Life Cover For As Little As 55p A Day*

You may already have enough life assurance cover to pay off the mortgage should anything happen to you. But how would your partner cope with all the other costs of living?

According to the Family Expenditure Survey 1994/5 (the latest available published figures), the average family spends £917 a month on things such as groceries, bills, clothing and leisure activities.

We know that no amount of money could ever replace your love for your dependants. However, from as little as 55p* a day you can cover their future with General Accident.

Term Assurance provides affordable life assurance protection for a fixed period, with a guaranteed cash sum payable on death during that period.

For a payment of only £17.00 a month* a General Accident Term Assurance policy can provide cover of £200,000 for 10 years, and what's more, your personal monthly premium is guaranteed never to increase.

An investment of £200,000 in a bank or building society would mean that your family could be sure of an income of £13,200 a year or £1,000 per month. And *that income is over and above the initial £200,000* investment which would remain intact.#

SO WITH ALL THESE EVERYDAY EXPENSES HOW COULD YOUR FAMILY MANAGE WITHOUT IT?

FREE FOR YOU

Call General Accident now to secure your family's future, and receive further information on Term Assurance and a personal illustration.

We'll also send you a *FREE GIFT* of a stylish Pen and Pencil set plus details of how to claim a second free gift – a choice of a Black and Decker Cordless Screwdriver, a Custom Monaco Roll Bag or a Casio Travel Clock Radio Alarm.

* Based on a healthy male, non-smoker, aged 30 next birthday. The cost of cover will depend on age, sex and smoking status.

Source: Micropal. Based on a UK savings account for investments of £2,500 and over 10 years to 2.9.96.

Full written details are available on request. Any financial advice given will relate only to the products of GA Life.

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NEW

A NEW HIGH INCOME PEP FROM MARKS & SPENCER

Do you want a regular income from your investment?

If you do not have a General PEP for the new tax year and would like your savings to provide you with a quarterly income, the new Marks & Spencer High Income PEP could be just what you are looking for -

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OFFER CLOSES 30th MAY 1997

Please remember the value of units and the income from them can go down as well as up.

Past performance is no guarantee of future performance.

For full details of both this Plan and our new Guaranteed Capital Investment Plan - Issue 4 including an application form and terms and conditions, simply

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UP TO
7.35% Gross p.a.
GUARANTEED TO 30 JUNE 2000

Peak Bond 7 is a high interest investment with rates guaranteed until 30 June 2000.

Interest is paid annually on *30 June, commencing 1998* – but you should invest now because this is a strictly limited offer.

The minimum investment is £5,000 and the maximum £250,000.

So to make Derbysure you don't miss out, complete the coupon and return it with your cheque today.

PEAK BOND 7
rates fixed until 30.6.2000

Amount you invest	Interest Rate % †Gross p.a.	% *Net p.a.
£25,000 and above	7.35%	5.88%
£10,000 – £24,999	6.75%	5.40%
£5,000 – £9,999	6.25%	5.00%

Please tick appropriate box:
☐ I/We enclose a cheque for £______ (min £5,000) made payable to Derbyshire Building Society, to be invested in the Derbyshire Peak Bond Issue 7 account
☐ Please send me further details of the Derbyshire Peak Bond Issue 7 account
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Please note. We will send you an investment account opening form when acknowledging your cheque. Post to, Derbyshire Building Society, FREEPOST, Duffield Hall, Duffield, Derby, DE 56 9BR. (NB FREEPOST may take up to 3 working days. For faster delivery you may wish to use first class post.)

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Be assured for the term of your life

Nathan Yates says increasing competition means the price of premiums has rarely been cheaper

If you are in the market for a life insurance policy, now is a good time to opt for term assurance, according to a report this week by Swiss Re, the leading reinsurer.

Increasing competition and fading anxieties over Aids have resulted in an average 12 per cent drop in term assurance premiums since 1994. Customers are now benefiting from some of the lowest premium prices since the war.

Term assurance is the simplest and often cheapest form of cover that the life insurance industry can offer. It has no investment element. The policy is arranged for a fixed period to pay out a fixed sum. If you die, it pays. If you live, you receive nothing.

The relatively low cost of term cover makes it the ideal choice for families who want a generous amount of life insurance for a small outlay. Recent publicity over the cost of the services carried out every week by a wife and mother has made families realise that both partners need life insurance. Although new men are reputed to be doing more around the house, to replace mother in her role as cook, cleaner, driver, nurse, gardener and such like will cost more than £300 a week.

However, a survey for *The Times* by London & Country, based in Bath, shows that when buying term assurance it still pays to shop around. Premiums in this sector of the insurance market vary widely. A 35-year-old man could pay up to £32.30 a month for a 20-year term with a payout of £100,000 with Clerical Medical. This compares well with the typical £50 cost of a whole-life policy of the same value, but is far from being the cheapest available.

If this customer were to buy a policy from Royal & Sun Alliance instead, he would cut the cost to just £10 a month. Over the full 20 years of the policy, this would make a difference of £5,352, which would mean that his bill would be cut by more than two thirds.

For a woman of 50 wanting the same cover, the savings could be even greater. Her monthly term insurance premium of £77.50 a month with Clerical Medical is again better than the £100 she would pay for a typical whole life policy, but selecting Royal & Sun Alliance would cut the bill to £21.10. Over 20 years this would add up to a saving of £13,536.

Price differences of this size are far from uncommon for term insurance customers, according to Patrick Bunton, of London & Country. "The term insurance market is now fiercely competitive and we've seen premium reductions of up to 30 per cent since 1992," he said. "Despite this, the gulf between the cheapest and most expensive insurers is huge. It is usually possible to cut the higher priced premiums by half through looking elsewhere."

Term assurance is similar to car insurance in that no one company is cheaper for all customers. The only way to find the best deal is to obtain quotes. Time can be saved by using telebrokers to sift through several companies for you.

When hunting for a policy, there are other features to look for besides headline cost. Some insurers guarantee their premiums so that you can be sure of no rise in price. With others, there is nothing to stop the company from raising the rates after you buy the policy, though if this happens you are free to close the agreement and move elsewhere.

Some insurers offer additional benefits with their deals. Customers may be allowed to claim immediately if they are diagnosed as terminally ill, allowing them the benefit of extra money while they are still alive. Some policies also offer an extra price reduction if you can prove that your job is low risk or if you take a medical test.

Selection of level term assurance premiums on £100,000 policy for man aged 35

Company	Monthly premium
Royal & Sun Alliance	£10.00 TR
Legal & General	£17.40
General Accident	£17.50 T
Standard Life	£18.00
Guardian	£19.60
Commercial Union	£21.50
Canada Life	£23.00 O
Clerical Medical	£32.30

Selection of level term assurance premiums on £100,000 policy for woman aged 50

Company	Monthly premium
Royal & Sun Alliance	£21.10 TR
Allied Dunbar	£33.68 TR
Canada Life	£35.50 O
Scottish Widows	£39.40 T
Norwich Union	£41.60 T
Legal & General	£46.00
General Accident	£48.90 T
Clerical Medical	£77.50

Assumes non-smoking.
T terminal illness included.
O occupation dependent.
R premium not guaranteed
Source: London & Country Mortgages

Domestic bliss: Although new men do more at home, to replace a wife in her many roles will cost more than £300 a week

INCOME TAX RATES 1997-98

Taxable income £	Slice rate £	Tax on slice %	Total tax £	£
0-4,100	4,100	20	820	820
4,101-26,100	22,00	23	5,060	5,880
Excess over 26,100	-	40	-	-
Discretionary trusts	-	34	-	-

Tax on savings restricted to 20% for basic taxpayers

INCOME TAX ALLOWANCES

Income Tax Allowances	1997-98 £	1996-97 £
Personal Allowances		
Under 65 years old	4,045	3,765
65-74 yers old	5,220	4,910
75 years old and over	5,400	5,090
Married Couple's Allowance		
Under 65 years old	1,830*	1,790*
65-74 years old	3,185*	3,115*
75 years old and over	3,225*	3,155*
Maximum income before abatement of reliefs for over 65s	15,600	15,200
Additional personal allowance-single-handed responsibility for children	1,830*	£1,790*
Blind person's allowance	1,280	1,250
Widow's bereavement allowance	1,830*	1,790*

Pension Premiums
Relief is limited to the following percentages of "net relevant earnings" (up to a maximum for personal pensions in 1997-98 of £84,000)

Age at beginning of tax year

Personal pensions	%	Retirement annuities	%
35 or less	17.5		
36-45	20		
46-50	25	50 or less	17.5
51-55	30	51-55	20
56-60	35	56-60	22.5
61 and over	40	61 and over	27.5
Life assurance benefits contributions element			5

**Relief restricted to 15%*

CAPITAL GAINS TAX RATES

	Exemption £	Tax rate %
Individuals and personal representatives	6,500	Income tax rate
Most trusts- interest in possession	3,250	23
- discretionary	3,250	34

PERSONAL PENSIONS

Do you need a personal pension that lets you retire early without penalty?

You may be quite happy with your pension. *Until you try to change it.*

Penalties for early retirement, penalties for varying contributions, even penalties for dying. You begin to wonder just whose pension it is.

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What is more, you have the reassurance of knowing that your pension fund is in the hands of one of the finest investment teams in the U.K.

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Benefit guides to aid claimants

The Child Poverty Action Group has updated three of its benefits books for 1997. *The Jobseeker's Allowance Handbook* gives a clear explanation and evaluation of the benefit that replaced income support for unemployed claimants. The handbook has been expanded to cover changes to the scheme since the benefit was introduced last year. Price: £6.95 (reduced to £2.50 for benefit claimants) incl p&p.

The twentieth edition of the *National Welfare Benefits Handbook* includes the latest housing benefit changes for single people under 60. It also covers income support, the social fund and council tax benefit. Price: £8.95. (£3 to benefit claimants).

The *Rights Guide* is written for claimants and their advisers. It offers authoritative guidance on non-means-tested benefits and how to claim them. Disability and incapacity benefit, maternity pay and benefits, statutory sick pay and widows' benefits are covered. Price: £8.95 (£3 to benefit claimants).

Send a cheque or postal order to CPAG Ltd, 1-5 Bath Street, London, EC1V 9PY.

■ CHEAP or interest-free loans provided by employers are taxable as a benefit in kind for directors and employees earning more than £8,500 a year. The average official rate of interest used to calculate the taxable benefit from a loan to an employee by an employer is 6.93 per cent for 1996-97. There are separate official rates of interest for some loans provided by employers in foreign currencies. For qualifying Japanese yen loans for 1996-97 the rate is 3.9 per cent, and for Swiss franc loans it is 5.5 per cent. Call the Inland Revenue on 0171 438 6420 for further information.

■ PRIVATE pension provision is essential, whether through your employer's scheme or your own private plan — what is at stake is your money and the security of your finances in retirement, says *Pension Power*, a new guide book written by Debbie Harrison. The book takes an in-depth look at all aspects of the pensions subject, answering questions such as what happens to your pension if you are made redundant or declared bankrupt? Published by John Wiley & Sons on April 24, price £13.99.

LIZANNE ROSE

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at April 10, 1997

	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	5,000	AIG Life (UK)	5.65
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	5.85
	20,000	AIG Life (UK)	5.95
	50,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.05
2 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.40
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.05
	20,000	Hambro Assured	6.15
	50,000	Hambro Assured	6.25
3 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.80
	10,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.33
	20,000	Hambro Assured	6.45
	50,000	AIG Life (UK)	6.53
4 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.30
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.35
5 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.30
	3,000	ITT London & Edin	7.00

Source: Chamberlain de Broë 0171-434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sainsbury's Bank 0500 405060	Instnt Access	Instant	£1	5.75	Yly
Buckinghamshire BS 01494 873064	Chiltern Gold	Postal	£5,000	5.80	½Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Instnt	Postal	£5,000	6.35	Yly
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Instnt Postal	Postal	£10,000	6.40	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Nottingham BS 0115 956 4422	Postal Plus	30 day p	£2,500	6.40	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day p	£25,000	6.70	Yly
Scarborough BS 0800 590578	Scarborough 100	100 day	£1,000	6.30	Yly
Leeds & Holbeck BS 0500 225777	Postal Bonus	30.6.98p	£50,000	7.05	OM

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Bank of Ireland (GB) 0800 971971	Fxd-Feeder opt	5 year	£3,000	7.50	F/Yly
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fxd+Feeder a/c	5 year	£8,575	7.50	F/Yly
West Bromwich BS 0990 143668		5 year	£3,000	7.00	Yly
Principality BS 01222 344188		5 year	£500	6.80	Yly

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.79%N	9.90%N	Nil
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.79%N	9.90%N	Nil
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.87%C	10.90%	Nil

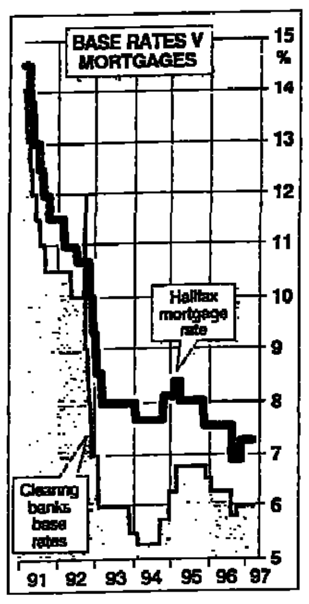
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

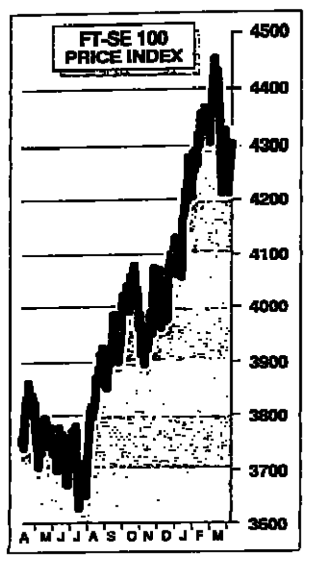
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	12.90%H	£112.66	£102.59
Lombard Direct 0800 215000	13.90%A	£120.02	£101.20
RBS Direct 0800 121125	14.00%	£114.95	£101.45

Nb. A = APR dependent on credit rating, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable), H = Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, OM = Interest paid on maturity, P = By Post only

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)





NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c[1]	1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*6	4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500**7	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond* 6	6.00	4.80	3.60	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond4	6.00	4.80	3.60	1,000-20,000**		0645 645000
44th Issue Cert†2 3	5.35			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.75			25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bond3 6	6.65	5.32	3.99	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
10th Index Linked†3	2.50			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S3 6	7.00	5.60	4.20	500-50,000[5]	60day	0645 645000

*[1] first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, inst accs for up to £100 [2] Unlimited additional hldgs for reinvested proceeds †Tax free *Rates gross and vble [3]Guaranteed when held for 5 years [4]0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ [5]£100,000 jt in addition to S1 and S2 holdings [6]Taxable but cred in full [7]£500-100,000 earn higher rates. **Tiered rates apply.*

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Canada Life..........Level	£ 9,792	£10,870	£12,340
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£ 9,806	£10,847	£12,269
Standard Lf ....Level	£ 9,776	£10,844	£12,248
Equitable Lf..........Level	£ 9,905	£10,824	£12,027
Generali ....Level	£ 9,697	£10,737	£12,091

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential ....Level	£9,237	£10,036	£11,214
Canada Life ....Level	£9,096	£ 9,901	£11,083
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£9,066	£ 9,806	£10,896
Generali ....Level	£8,803	£ 9,659	£10,843
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,971	£ 9,658	£10,617

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 Female: Age 55	Age 65 Age 60	Age 70 Age 65
Canada Life ....Level	£8,671	£9,287	£10,163
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£8,690	£9,264	£10,083
Prudential ....Level	£8,726	£9,217	£ 9,951
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,660	£9,186	£ 9,910
Stalwart ....Level	£8,465	£9,153	£ 9,930

Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 9393)

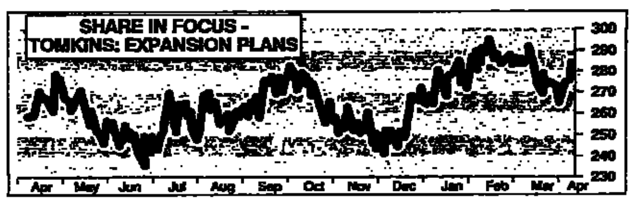
Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	104.30	8.974	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	128.36	9.057	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	143.61	9.053	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	148.37	9.014	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	143.76	9.043	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	134.83	8.959	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	127.50	9.216	100.25	10,000
Halifax	8.750%	100.63	8.695	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	134.66	8.593	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.625%	154.70	8.807	100.00	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	148.70	8.995	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	120.38	8.913	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	140.71	8.972	100.45	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	142.28	8.873	100.14	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	143.49	8.973	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (30/09-27/03)	9.04063%	112.00	100.00	1,000
First Nat(22/09-20/03)	9.12031%	101.50	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares
Source ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Alliance & Leic 0800 412214	4.25	to £250k	90	Rate after 3% disc to 1.5.98
Woolwich Local Branch	4.29	£20-200k	50	3% disc-6 mth plus 3% cashbk
Nationwide 0800 302010	3.09	to £500k	75	3.90% disc for 1 year
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% dsc-6 mth, 3% dsc-6 mths
Royal Bank of Scot 0800 121 121	4.25	£150-250k	90	3% discount to 1.10.97

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Scarborough 0800 590547	0.25	£30-100k	95	6.99% dsc-6 mth 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Nottingham Imper. 0115 9817220	0.75	£25-150k	75	Fixed at 0.75% until 31.1.98
Universal 0191 232 0973	1.24	£20-150k	95	6% disc until 1.7.98
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50%dsc-6 mth 3% dsc-6 mth
Royal Bank of Scot 0800 121 121	4.25	£150-250k	90	3% discount to 1.10.97

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Bristol & West 0800 119955	4.99	£15k+	95	Rate fixed until 1.3.98
Newbury 01635 43676	3.99	£15-150k	95	3% discount for 12 months
Halifax 01422 333333	4.25	no min/max	95	3% discount until 31.5.99
Banks				
Bnk of Ireland 0118 9510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	6.50% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 mths
TSB Bank 0500 758000	3.51	£15k+	95	3.74% dsc-1 year, 2%dsc+£500cshbk

Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides Ltd. (01753 880482).

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UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AEGON LIFE ASSURANCE Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh, EH12 9SE 0131 339 9191				
Balanced	539.40	570.80	+ 7.60	...
UK Equity	731.00	773.60	+12.20	...
Property	427.90	452.90	- 0.90	...
Fixed Interest	361.30	382.40	+ 2.10	...
Money	273.10	289.10	+ 0.30	...
International	413.20	437.30	+ 8.60	...
ABBEY LIFE Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8AL 01202 292373				
Custodian S4	199.20	209.70	+ 0.70	...
Ethical S4	170.10	179.10	+ 1.40	...
International S4	217.50	229	+ 1.80	...
Protected Gth S4	126.60	133.30	+ 1.00	...
Asian Pacific	205.90	216.80	+ 1.40	...
European S4	228.20	240.30	+ 4.30	...
Prop Fd Ser 4	412.40	434.20	+ 0.20	...
Equity Ser 4	288.10	303.30	+ 3.00	.
Man Ser 4	806.70	849.20	+ 6.20	...
Conv Ser 4	358.80	377.70	+ 0.30	...
Money Ser 4	358.40	377.30	+ 0.30	...
Fixed Int Ser 4	402.70	423.90	+ 1.10	...
American Ser 4	685.10	721.20	+16.90	...
High Inc Ser 4	876.50	922.70	+10.10	...
Indexed Inv Ser 4	231.90	244.20	- 0.40	...
Japan Ser 4	264.90	278.90	- 7.60	...
ALBANY LIFE 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AJ 01707 42311				
Equity Fd Acc	2043.20	2150.70	+19.40	...
European Fd Acc	509.20	536.00	+ 9.30	...
Fixed Int Acc	576.80	607.10	+ 1.50	...
Gtd Money Acc	365.10	384.20	+ 0.30	...
Intl Managed Acc	744.40	783.60	+13.60	...
Int Fxd Int Acc	365.90	385.10	+ 0.10	...
Japan Fund	212.00	223.10	- 5.60	...
N American Acc	429.10	451.60	+ 9.70	...
Prop Fd Acc	488.00	513.70	- 0.60	...
Multiple Inv Acc	1265.80	1332.40	+10.20	...
ALLIED DUNBAR ASSURANCE Swindon SN1 1EL 01793 514514				
Ful Int Dep Acc	409.70	431.30	+ 0.30	..
Equity Acc	1775.70	1869.20	+18.10	...
Property Acc	677.10	712.80	+ 0.10	..
Far East Acc	312.50	329.00	+ 2.00	...
Managed Capital	626.20	659.20	+ 5.80	...
-do- Acc	1350.40	1421.50	+12.70	...
Overseas Acc	1259.50	1325.80	+22.80	...
Gilt Edged Acc	562.40	592.00	+ 3.70	...
Amer Equity Acc	1150.50	1211.10	+18.40	...
Amer Man Acc	481.00	506.40	+ 7.40	...
Amer Prop Acc	118.90	125.20	+ 0.70	...
Distribution Bonds	25.50	26.90	+ 0.10	...
AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE ASSURANCE Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Bucks 01494 463463				
Reserve Ser 6	180.40	189.80	+ 0.30	...
Balncd Ser 6	889.40	936.30	+11.00	..
Opportunity Ser 6	203.50	214.20	+ 2.50	..
Distribution Ser 6	105.90	111.40	+ 0.90	6.56
UK Equities Ser 6	£13.29	£13.99	+21.70	...
Higher Inc Ser 6	£13.69	£14.41	+25.50	...
North Amer Ser 6	573.80	604.00	+12.70	..
Far East Ser 6	536.90	565.10	+ 0.70	...
Europe Ser 6	514.40	541.40	+ 5.40	...
Intnl Ser 6	668.00	703.10	+ 7.30	..
Property Ser 6	617.20	649.60	+ 1.00	...
Fixed Int Ser 6	500.10	526.40	+ 0.90	..
Ind-Lnkd Sec S6	202.80	213.40	+ 0.40	..
Gtrd Dep Ser 6	326.40	343.50	+ 0.30	...
BARCLAYS LIFE 252 Romford Road, London E7 9JB 0181 534 5544				
Equity Acc	1138.30	1198.30	+17.60	...
-do- Initial	692.90	729.40	+10.70	..
Gilt Edged Acc	446.90	470.50	+ 1.40	.
-do- Initial	274.40	288.90	+ 1.00	.
International Acc	454.10	478.00	+ 3.70	.
-do- Initial	277.40	292.00	+ 2.30	...
Managed Acc	652.90	687.30	+ 7.30	...
-do- Initial	399.70	420.80	+ 4.40	..
Money Acc	318.50	335.30	+ 0.20	...
Property Acc	326.00	343.20	+ 2.20	...
-do- Initial	198.80	209.30	...	...
America Acc	392.20	412.90	+ 7.70	...
Far East Gwth	256.70	270.30	+ 4.50	...
Financial Acc	500.90	527.30	+ 8.30	.
500 Accum	549.70	578.70	+ 3.90	...
Japan Acc	208.30	219.30	- 6.40	...
Income Acc	674.30	709.80	+11.10	..
Leisure Acc	338.10	355.90	+ 1.00	...
Special Sits Acc	346.30	364.60	+ 5.90	.
Univ Tech Acc	187.30	197.20	+ 1.80	...
BLACK HORSE LIFE Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent ME4 4JF 01634 834000				
The Managed Fd	982.64	982.64	-13.87	..
Income Fund	950.54	£10.00	+15.95	...
Extra Income	857.53	902.67	+10.94	...
Worldwide Gth	550.75	579.74	+ 8.45	...
Balanced Fund	845.11	889.59	+12.02	...
Smllr Cos Recvy	£10.96	£11.53	+ 4.92	...
N Amer & Genrl	475.34	500.36	+13.42	..
Pacific Basin	420.73	442.88	+ 8.72	..
German Growth	282.42	297.29	+ 0.46	...
Japan Growth	141.23	148.67	- 4.30	...
The UK Gth Fd	274.36	288.80	+ 3.72	...
Contl Euro Gth	177.98	187.35	+ 3.24	.
Property Fund	432.30	455.15	+ 1.03	...
Fixed Interest	371.05	390.56	+ 2.71	..
Cash Fund	309.57	325.87	+ 0.24	..
Managed Inv	585.55	616.37	+ 8.04	...
Nth Amer Recvy	295.35	310.91	+ 6.98	...
Abtrust Fund				
Managed Grth	539.39	567.78	- 3.64	...
BRITANNIA 50 Bothwell St, Glasgow G2 6HR 0141 248 2000				
Measured Perf	206.30	218.30	- 2.90	.
Performance Plus	234.70	248.30	+ 5.10	...
With Profit Perf	192.00	203.10	+ 0.30	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
UK Opportunity	267.60	283.00	+ 3.80	...
Euro Opportunity	287.10	303.80	+ 8.30	...
North Amer Opp	244.90	259.10	+ 5.00	...
Far East Opp	201.50	213.20	+ 2.50	...
Gwth Prop Ser 1	182.50	192.10	+ 5.90	...
Gth Prop Ser 2	215.40	227.90	..	...
Fixed Int	231.90	245.40	+ 1.00	...
Cash	173.20	183.20	+ 0.20	6.49
Overseas	270.50	286.20	+ 5.90	...
Formerly LAS				
Managed Fund	432.20	455.00	+ 6.20	...
UK Equity	809.40	852.00	+11.70	...
Property	297.30	313.00	...	...
Money Markets	274.40	288.90	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Interest	336.90	354.70	+ 1.40	...
Japan	283.40	298.40	- 6.70	...
North America	217.90	229.40	+ 4.40	...
International	418.00	440.00	+ 9.10	..
European	367.20	386.60	+10.60	...
Far East	149.20	157.10	+ 1.80	...
CANADA LIFE 2-6 High Street, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5BA 01707 51122				
Managed	406.20	427.60	+ 3.90	...
Property	283.00	297.90	- 0.10	..
Gilt & Fxd Int	273.60	288.00	+ 1.30	..
Equity	496.30	522.50	+ 7.90	..
Cash	233.50	245.80	+ 0.10	
CLife Euro Mgd	467.60	492.30	+ 2.40	..
CLife Intl Fd	371.50	391.10	+ 1.20	..
Managed Fund	867.20	912.80	+ 8.10	..
Property Fund	568.20	598.10	+ 0.30	..
Equity Fund	1224.80	1289.30	+19.50	..
Gilt Edged Fd	705.90	743.00	+ 3.40	.
Deposit Fund	361.40	380.40	+ 0.20	..
Investment Fd	540.00	567.00	+ 8.20	.
International	591.40	622.50	+ 2.00	..
CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE Scailey House, 500 Avebury Blvd. Milton Keynes MK9 2NU. 01908 606101				
Property Fund	175.30	184.60	.	..
Managed Fund	777.50	818.50	+ 9.20	
Equity Fund	470.70	495.50	+ 8.00	.
CLERICAL MEDICAL/FIDELITY INVESTMENTS Narrow Plain, Bristol BS2 0JH. 0117 9290566				
Assurance Funds				
Sapphire Mixed	350.20	368.70	+ 2.70	...
Ruby	200.50	210.90	+ 0.90	..
Emerald	161.50	170.10	+ 0.30	..
Equity	426.10	448.60	+ 4.30	.
Property	244.90	257.80	+ 0.10	
Gilt & Fixed Int	234.20	246.60	+ 1.10	.
Indexed Secs	186.00	195.80	..	..
Cash	203.90	214.70	+ 0.10	..
Nth American	309.30	325.60	+10.00	.
Far East	268.10	282.30	- 8.20	..
International	272.50	286.90	+ 1.90	..
Special Sits	469.10	493.80	+ 7.30	..
Intl Income	379.70	399.70	+ 5.40	.
European	430.10	452.80	+ 5.40	..
Japanese	100.10	105.40	- 4.80	..
SE Asia	399.90	420.90	+ 5.70	..
With Profits Reg	190.40	200.50	+ 0.30	..
-do- Spec	190.40	200.50	+ 0.30	..
Flexible Retirement Plans Funds				
Mixed	416.60	438.60	+ 4.60	..
Equity	540.00	568.50	+ 7.70	...
Property	230.60	242.80	+ 0.30	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	304.00	320.10	+ 1.70	..
Index Linked	199.70	210.30	+ 0.10	...
Cash	280.40	295.20	+ 0.30	.
Nth American	388.50	409.00	+14.00	.
Far East Acc	279.50	293.20	- 4.70	.
International Acc	349.60	368.00	+ 4.30	.
Special Sits	717.50	755.30	+11.20	...
European Flex	632.10	665.40	+ 7.50	...
COLONIAL MUTUAL GROUP Colonial Mutual House, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4YY. 01634 890 000				
(Units): Key 1	249.06	...	- 7.72	...
-do- Pacemaker 1	384.74	...	- 8.79	...
-do- Cash	219.53	231.26	.	.
-do- Equity	683.00	719.99	.	.
-do- Fxd Int	413.45	435.21	.	..
-do- Managed	486.43	512.03	...	...
-do- Property	360.46	388.01	.	..
(Pens): Cash Cap	216.01	227.39	...	...
-do- Cash Inv	343.13	361.20	...	...
-do- Equity Cap	£17.93	£18.87	...	...
-do- Equity Inv	£28.48	£29.98	...	...
-do- Fixed Cap	442.85	466.17	...	...
-do- Fixed Inv	703.49	740.52	...	...
-do- Index Cap	212.65	223.86	...	...
-do- Index Inv	337.81	355.60	..	...
-do- Mngd Cap	707.02	744.24	..	...
-do- Mngd Inv	£11.23	£11.82	...	...
COMMERCIAL UNION St Helen's, 1 Undershaft, EC3 0171 283 7500				
Var Ann Acc (5) 1	991.72	.	+11.20	...
Var Ann (5) 2	£15.38		+ 1.04	...
Prime Managed	488.70	514.50	+ 2.00	
Prime UK Equity	637.20	670.80	+ 3.40	...
Prime Int Equity	331.40	348.90	+ 0.60	.
Prime Property	256.90	270.40	+ 0.10	..
Prime Fxd Int	264.80	278.80	+ 1.20	...
Prime Index-Lnk	187.70	197.60	- 0.30	.
Prime Cash	224.40	236.30	+ 0.20	..
CONFEDERATION LIFE Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2NN 01438 744840				
Managed Fund	1332.40	1402.51	- 7.32	...
Equity II	1994.80	2099.70	- 4.51	...
For Crown see Windsor				
EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE Montpellier Drive, Cheltenham, GL53 7LQ. 01242 221311				
Life Funds				
U1 Wth Pfts (5)(4) 1	112.90	.	+ 0.10	
Secure (2) 1	108.20	...	+ 0.10	...
Managed (2) 1	115.30	.	+ 1.00	...
Equity Mngd (2) 1	119.00	.	+ 0.90	...
Adventurous (2) 1	110.10	..	+ 1.40	..

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Bristol & West (2) 1	109.50	...	+ 0.10	...
Equity Mgd S1	291.10	306.50	+ 2.20	...
Managed S1	290.70	306.10	+ 2.40	...
Adventurous S1	229.10	241.20	+ 2.80	...
Managed (2)	195.90	206.30	+ 1.70	...
Pension Funds				
Unit With Pfts (5) 1	112.20	...	+ 0.20	...
Secure (2) 1	108.30	...	+ 0.20	...
Managed (2) 1	116.30	...	+ 1.20	...
Equity Mngd (2) 1	117.20	...	+ 1.10	..
Adventurous (2) 1	107.80	...	+ 1.60	..
Bristol & West (2) 1	109.50	...	+ 0.10	...
EAGLE STAR/MIDLAND 60 St Mary Axe, London EC3. 0171 929 1111				
Eagle/Mid Uts	379.80	393.50	+ 7.40	0.01
FRIENDS' PROVIDENT Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SH 01722 413366				
Managed	384.90	405.20	+ 3.80	...
UK Equity	539.60	568.00	+ 6.10	...
Stewardship	485.40	511.00	+ 0.40	...
Overseas Equity	348.80	367.20	+ 3.80	...
North American	206.80	217.70	+ 3.00	...
Pacific Basin	169.20	178.20	+ 1.50	...
European	336.70	354.50	+ 7.30	...
Property	188.70	198.70	+ 0.20	...
Fixed Interest	275.90	290.50	+ 1.00	...
Index Linked	188.10	198.00	- 0.40	.
Cash	220.00	231.60	+ 0.20	...
FP Life Assurance ex NM				
Fixed Interest	609.20	641.20	+ 4.30	..
Managed	856.50	901.50	+13.70	.
Deposit	375.90	395.60	+ 0.20	..
Property	537.40	565.60	+ 2.20	.
American	564.80	594.50	+11.60	...
Australian	670.00	705.20	+23.90	...
European	787.30	828.70	+25.40	...
Income Acc	955.10	1005.30	+14.60	
-do- Dist	525.60	553.20	+ 8.20	4.44
International	364.50	383.60	+ 4.20	.
Japan Smaller	311.20	327.50	-10.20	.
Singapore & Mal	430.90	453.40	+ 9.00	..
Smaller Cos	537.20	565.40	+12.90	
Tokyo Fund	525.30	552.90	-11.70	.
UK Equity	743.00	782.70	+10.70	.
CCM Vantd Mg	913.10	961.00	+15.50	
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD Alban Gate, 14th Flr, 125 London Wall, Lond EC2Y 5AS. 0171 710 4567				
GT Plan Far East	314.50	331.20	+ 5.20	...
GT Plan Wwide	564.00	594.40	+ 8.00	...
GAN LIFE & PENSIONS Gan House, Harlow, Essex CM20 2EW. 01279 626262				
Portfolio Acc	[illegible]	[illegible]	+ 6.30	.
-do- Inv A	804.90	847.30	+ 6.00	..
UK Equity	523.10	550.70	+ 5.20	.
Gilt Plus	227.90	240.00	+ 2.50	.
Managed	365.10	384.40	+ 3.17	.
GENERAL ACCIDENT 2 Rougier St, York YO1 1HR. 01904 628982				
Managed	256.90	270.30	+ 2.40	.
Unitised Profit	161.50	170.00	+ 0.30	.
Uk Equity	380.10	400.00	+ 5.00	.
Fixed Int	221.10	232.60	+ 1.70	..
Index-Linked	183.20	192.70	- 0.20	..
Cash Deposit	189.80	199.70	+ 0.10	..
Property	183.70	193.30	+ 0.20	...
International	204.80	215.50	+ 3.17	..
American	224.10	235.80	+ 3.40	..
Japan	189.60	199.50	- 5.30	...
Japan Smllr Cos	194.30	204.50	- 2.40	..
European	227.00	238.90	+ 2.10	..
Pacific Fund	308.50	324.60	+ 3.50	.
Conv Life	161.70	170.10	+ 0.20	...
Formerly Provident Mutual				
Managed Ord	586.30	617.20	+ 5.90	.
Managed Initial	366.20	385.50	+ 3.20	.
Equity Ord	960.50	1011.10	+12.90	...
Equity Init	600.00	631.60	+ 7.50	...
I-Linked Gilt Ord	223.30	235.10	- 0.20	...
I-Linked Gilt Init	145.72	153.40	- 0.12	...
Oseas Equity Ord	431.70	454.40	+ 2.60	
Oseas Equity Init	269.70	283.90	+ 1.52	.
Property Ord	285.20	300.20	+ 2.20	
Property Init	178.20	187.60	+ 0.10	
Fixed Int Ord	323.10	340.10	+ 1.50	..
Fixed Int Init	201.90	212.51	+ 0.80	..
Deposit Ord	226.30	238.20	+ 0.20	
Deposit Initial	141.40	148.80		
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE Royal Exchange London EC3 0171 283 7101				
AM Prop Bds	[illegible]	931.30		...
Managed Initial	554.70	583.90	+ 6.70	...
-do- Acc	831.90	875.90	+ 9.90	...
Equity Initial	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	...
-do- Acc	1359.30	1429.80	+22.40	..
Fixed Int Initial	476	501	+ 1.50	...
-do- Acc	715.90	753.20	+ 2.30	..
Intl Initial	495.20	521.20	+ 7.80	..
-do- Acc	747.90	787.30	+11.70	..
Nth Amer Initial	246.60	259.60	+ 6.00	...
-do- Acc	337.40	355.20	+ 9.20	...
Pacific Initial	205.10	215.90	+ 0.50	..
-do- Acc	278	292.60	+ 0.80	...
Property Initial	186.00	196.20	.	..
-do- Acc	280	294.70		..
Index-Lnkd Initl	169	177.90	- 0.40	.
-do- Acc	231.20	243.40	- 0.45	.
Deposit Initial	206.10	217	+ 0.12	..
-do- Acc	309.90	326.20	+ 0.30	..
Euro Initial	131.10	138	+ 2.20	...
-do- Acc	165.80	174.50	+ 2.91	.
HALIFAX LIFE LTD PO Box 285, York YO1 1YB 01904 611110				
Life Funds				
Foundation	31.22	32.87	+ 0.20	.
Balanced	31.12	32.68	+ 0.22	.
Opportunity	31.88	33.56	+ 0.26	.
Deposit	25.97	27.22	+ 0.02	.
Pension Funds				
Foundation S2	23.96	25.22	+ 1.12	..
Balanced S2	23.94	25.24	+ 1.20	...
Opportunity S2	23.74	24.99	+ 1.26	
Deposit S2	24.07	25.27	+ 0.02	.

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
HAMBRO ASSURED Harbour House, Portway, Preston, Lancs PR2 2PR. 01772 840000				
Managed	208.00	218.90	+ 2.30	...
-do- Pens	267.80	281.80	+ 3.60	...
UK Equity	226.40	238.30	+ 2.80	...
-do- Pens	274.50	288.90	+ 4.40	...
International	172.70	181.70	+ 1.90	...
-do- Pens	191.80	201.80	+ 2.60	...
Deposit	152.00	159.90	+ 0.10	...
-do- Pens	185.10	194.80	- 0.20	...
HILL SAMUEL LIFE NLA Tower, Addiscombe Road, Croydon 0181 686 4355				
Security Fund	713.30	754.90	+ 2.20	..
British Fund	733.10	775.80	+10.80	..
International	630.30	667.00	+ 5.00	..
Dollar Fund	554.80	587.10	+ 9.30	..
Capital Fund	609.00	644.50	+ 6.70	..
Income Fund	912.90	966.00	+12.10	...
Property Series A	515.60	545.70	...	4.90
Property Units	858.70	901.70	...	...
Financial Fund	855.30	905.10	+ 9.10	..
Managed Ser A	674.10	713.40	+ 6.30	..
Managed Units	1217.10	1281.20	+10.80	..
High Yield Fund	817.10	864.70	+ 7.80	..
Money Series A	317.00	335.50	+ 0.20	..
Money Units	423.90	446.30	+ 0.30	..
Equity Fund	770.80	815.20	+ 8.30	..
Fixed Interest	424.40	449.20	+ 1.60	...
Indexed Secs	205.10	217.10	- 0.40	...
European Fund	968.60	1025.00	+ 2.50	..
Natural Res	707.70	725.70	+ 2.30	..
Far East Fund	594.80	629.50	+ 1.30	..
Smaller Cos	689.70	729.90	+ 4.20	..
Special Sits	707.80	749.00	+ 0.10	..
Man Currency	284.80	301.40	.	.
Japanese Tech	258.10	273.20	+ 0.20	..
US Smaller Cos	411.90	435.80	+12.00	
Formerly Target Life Assurance Co Ltd				
Deposit	271.20	285.50	+ 0.20	..
Financial Ser 1	68.40	72.90	+ 0.70	..
Fixed Interest	373.20	392.90	+ 1.30	
Gold	80.70	85.10	+ 0.20	.
Managed	751.90	791.10	+ 7.50	.
Mngd Growth	233.30	245.70	+ 2.40	.
Mngd Opp	250.10	263.20	+ 2.50	...
Property	381.50	401.50		.
Residential Prop	118.50	124.80	+ 0.20	..
TSB American	322.30	339.30	+ 3.80	..
TSB Brit Gwth	1151.10	1211.70	+15.20	
TSB European	362.30	379.30	+ 1.30	...
TSB Income	531.50	559.50	+ 6.70	...
TSB Intl	494.50	510.50	+ 4.10	
TSB Intl Inc	350.10	368.10	+ 1.00	...
TSB Pacific	427.50	450.10	+ 2.50	.
TSB Prem Inc	323.50	338.20	+ 1.30	..
IRISH LIFE ASSURANCE Irish Life Centre, Victoria Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 5TF. 01727 48181				
Global Managed	700.30	737.20	+ 7.10	...
Global Property	321.40	338.30		...
Global Fixed Int	591.40	623.00	+ 2.80	...
Global Equity	770.50	811.10	+ 9.40	...
Global Cash	234.20	246.50	+ 0.30	..
For Laurentian see Lincoln				
LEGAL & GENERAL UNIT ASSURANCE 2 Montefiore Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 1SE 01273 824000				
B Soc Lnkd Inl	134.80	141.90	...	..
-do- Acc	198.70	209.20	+ 0.10	...
Brit Opps Int	180.60	190.20	+ 1.70	...
-do- Acc	240.50	253.20	+ 2.30	.
Cash Initial	171.10	180.20	+ 0.20	..
-do- Acc	316.30	332.70	+ 0.30	..
Equity Initial	826.30	870.40	+13.20	..
-do- Acc	1526.60	1607.30	+24.30	..
Fixed Initial	372.50	392.20	+ 1.50	..
-do- Acc	687.50	724.00	+ 2.60	...
Index-Lnkd Gilt	138.60	145.70	- 0.30	..
-do- Acc	215.10	226.60	- 0.40	..
Intl Initial	339.70	356.10	+ 3.00	..
-do- Acc	615.70	648.20	+ 5.40	..
Managed Initial	549.70	578.70	+ 5.90	...
-do- Acc	1014.90	1068.40	+10.90	..
Property Initial	227.70	239.70	+ 0.30	..
-do- Acc	420.40	442.60	+ 0.60	.
LINCOLN The Quays, 101-105 Oxford Road, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 1LZ 01895 200 200				
Equity Units	17106	...	+215.00	..
Property Units	2927	3081		.
Bal Bd Exec Unit	7966	8385	+77.00	...
2nd Equity Acc	811.90	854.50	+13.80	..
2nd High Inc Ac	779.70	820.60	+11.40	...
2nd Property Acc	263.20	277.00	...	...
2nd Mngd 2 Acc	200.50	211.00	+ 0.50	..
2nd Mngd 3 Acc	553.50	582.90	+ 5.30	...
2nd Mngd 4 Acc	267.60	281.60	+ 2.00	..
2nd Deposit Acc	310.20	326.40	- 0.20	...
2nd Gilt Acc	343.10	361.10	+ 1.20	.
2nd Amer Acc	876.10	922.10	+11.90	.
2nd Intl Mny Acc	242.40	255.10	- 1.60	.
2nd Index Acc	220.50	232.10	- 0.10	.
2nd Far East Acc	389.60	409.90	- 7.80	.
2nd Global Acc	186.10	195.90	+ 0.40	.
2nd Euro Acc	198.90	209.30	+ 3.10	.
2nd Japan Acc	134.80	141.80	- 4.90	..
2nd Int Cr Bd Acc	170.80	179.70	- 0.10	..
2nd Cap Gth Acc	159.30	168.60	+ 2.00	
ex-Laurentian				
Property	563.20	592.90		
Managed	497.30	523.40	+ 4.70	...
American	522.10	549.60	+ 5.50	...
UK Equity Fd	598.10	629.20	+ 9.50	...
Japan	147.80	155.50	- 5.30	...
Index-Lkd	202.70	213.30	- 0.10	...
High Yield	1087	1144	+14.00	...
Money	440.70	463.70	+ 0.30	...
International	412.40	434.10	+ 1.30	.
Henderson Active	224.80	236.60	+ 2.70	.
Perpetual Active	371.70	391.10	+ 7.30	...
Growth Acc	778.30	819.00	+ 7.10	...
Gilt Edged	485.90	511.50	+ 2.10	..

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Profitable Peps — but for whom?

From Mr D.G. Pearson

Sir, I have always believed that a quick calculation shows there is no real benefit in personal equity plans for most of us. (typical dividend 5 per cent, tax on this 1 per cent, typical management charge, 1 per cent). Only those for whom capital gains tax is an issue really benefit.

However, I have only recently realised how very expensive Peps can actually be.

My wife holds shares in the BP General Pep, run by Midland Stockbrokers sponsored by BP. Last year, BP provided the option of taking dividends in new shares rather than in cash. This option is just as available to ordinary shareholders as it is to Pep managers. However, Midland tell me that tax cannot be reclaimed on such scrip issues. The only tax they can reclaim is on the small difference between the full dividend and the value of the whole number of shares allocated — something less than £1.

Midland clearly thought that they deserved a greater reward for this, so last year they increased the annual charge from a flat £10 to 0.3 per cent (about £50 in our case, and still considerably less than most Peps). Of course, in order to collect their £50 they have to reduce the number of scrip shares and take part of the dividend in cash.

In short, the only service they provide for the management fee is to raise enough cash to collect their fee. Last November's statement read: Scrip dividend 17 shares, Cash dividend £9.65, Management Fees £12.73, Tax Credit reclaimed £2.41.

Yours faithfully,
D. PEARSON,
Moravka, Beech Grove,
Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

Keeping up standards

From Mrs N.Bagshaw

Sir, In reply to Mr Purnell's question "is it always this difficult to get money out of the Scots?", (Scots take their revenge, March 22) — no it is not. My husband had an endowment policy with Standard Life, due to mature on February 15, 1995. The cheque was posted from the Edinburgh office on February 9, in good time to be in our bank account before the maturity date.

Having read various horror stories in the newspapers about delays in maturity payments, we were expecting similar service. We were pleasantly surprised both by the promptness of the issue of the cheque and by the fact that we were kept informed of the procedures involved in the repayment of the mortgage and the progress made, from two months before maturity date.

Yours faithfully,
NORMA BAGSHAW,
59 Clement Road,
Marple Bridge, Stockport.

■ Letters to Weekend Money can be sent by fax to 0171-787 5082, but *The Times* regrets it cannot give individual replies. No legal responsibility can be accepted for the advice given in these columns and professional advice should always be sought on investments.

Call for a recount

Ah!. My Black Beauty!
Bit of a bimbo on the arithmetic apparently
GED

From Mr R. Breckman

Sir, A postscript to my recent letters about the efficiency problems at Lloyds Bank. We asked for a certificate of a balance on a client's account.

The certified response was £566. It should have been £193,025. A slight difference of £192,459 but who is counting? Certainly not Lloyds Bank.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT BRECKMAN,
Breckman & Company,
Chartered Accountants,
49 South Molton Street, W1.

The rack for pension providers

From Mr F. Beecheno

Sir, Referring to John Trayner's very measured letter (A simple way to reduce pension costs, March 22), the time has surely come that personal pensions providers should be coerced further into providing meaningful figures to enable their customers to judge not only their effective charging but also their performance.

The annual pensions statements I have seen are marvels of deceit by omission: no indication of deductions, no comparison of performance. It need not be this way, but I see no sign of pensions companies striving to rectify this second scandal. I recommend an annual face-to-face with pensions representatives to put to them pointed questions over their outrageous charges and pedestrian performance.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCIS BEECHENO,
46 South Park Road,
Wimbledon.

Voting with our feet

From Ms A.Freer

Sir, I write to support the excellent letter from the Bishop of Beverley (Halifax board has moral duty to disabled, March 29) about the lack of moral responsibility on the part of members of the Board of the Halifax Building Society in denying shares to disabled customers young and old.

I am a friend's receiver and hold her account and my own at the Woolwich, which has the same policy as the Halifax — denial of shares to those whose right it is to have them. There must be hundreds of us who will be moving accounts after the conversion unless their policy is changed by law.

Yours faithfully,
ANNA FREER,
39 Hexham Road, SE27.

Societies' scourge plans fourth Bill

Douglas French, the Tory candidate for Gloucester, champion of the rights of building society savers, plans a fourth Private Member's Bill to force converting societies to give free shares to all their customers when they float on the Stock Exchange. This would finally end the injustice done to thousands of of savers who have been excluded from building society payouts because they are the second-named holders on accounts. Under current rules, only first-named accountholders benefit.

As an MP, Mr French has demonstrated remarkable skill and luck in piloting two Private Member's Bills through Parliament under its Ten-Minute Rule in the past two years. Both sought to extend the scope of payouts from mutual building societies when they float or merge with listed companies. The latest, which enshrined the rights of disabled savers, received Royal Assent just as Parliament was prorogued for the general election. *The Times* led the campaign for the rights of thousands of disabled savers, unable to manage their own financial affairs who were second-named account holders at their building societies.

In piloting three Bills through the House, Mr French has equalled a record only previously achieved by Roy Jenkins, now Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, and Sir Gerald Nabarro in the 1960s. "I need a third one to see off the opposition," said Mr French. If re-elected, he intends to introduce a one-line amendment making his first Act compulsory rather than voluntary. Under the Building Societies (Joint Account Holders) Act 1995, societies can include in their share windfalls savers such as widowers, newlyweds and divorcees who are the named second on joint accounts. Mr French said all the societies that have embarked on demutualisation since the passing of the Joint Holders Act — Alliance & Leicester, Halifax, Northern Rock and Woolwich — had only applied the Act for widowers, on the grounds that it is administratively too complex. "Just a cop out," he said. The Alliance & Leicester has, however, made concessions to its disabled savers and the Northern Rock will pay £1 million into charities for the disabled by way of compensation for the lost payouts.

French: equalled the record

Mr French, who defends a majority of 6,000, is confident the amendment would be approved as it would not make the Act retrospective and is manifestly just. "The building societies have excluded millions of members from sharing in conversions. They should not get away with it."

GAVIN LUMSDEN

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See Page 38

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General Inc	602.80	641.30	+ 8.00	2.32
UK Growth Acc	505.20	537.50	+ 8.00	2.47
UK Growth Inc	322.90	343.60	+ 0.80	2.47
Higher Inc Acc	904.30	962.10	+16.30	3.92
Higher Inc Inc	474.50	504.80	+ 0.90	3.92
Gilts/Fxd Int Acc	214.30	228.20	+ 0.40	5.58
Gilts/Fxd Int Inc	91.56	96.71	+ 0.19	5.58
Nth America	346.40	368.60	+ 8.60	
Europe	393.00	418.10	+ 4.30	0.28
Brit Excell	99.61	106.00	+ 1.50	2.57
Brit Fedrnts Acc	127.20	135.40	+ 2.00	4.55
Brit Fedrnts Inc	83.91	89.27	+ 1.29	4.55
Global Opps	103.40	110.10	+ 1.40	0.11
Balanced Acc	66.37	70.61	+ 0.72	2.31
Balanced Inc	61.39	65.31	+ 0.85	2.31
Japan Acc	36.82	39.18	− 0.73	...
Pac Basin Acc	381.30	405.70	+ 6.30	1.00

ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS
0345 717 373

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Gilts & Fixed Int	131.60	139.60†	+ 0.30	6.67
High Inc Equity	198.00	209.60†	+ 3.00	4.53
Worldwide Bond	262.80	278.60	− 0.80	4.71
American Growth	413.20	441.90	+11.10	0.38
Asian Pacific	319.50	341.70	+ 6.80	0.40
Assets & Earnings	321.10	343.40	+ 6.40	2.75
Euro Capital Acc	202.30	216.40	+ 4.40	0.73
Extra Inc	43.03	45.78†	+ 0.28	7.99
General	290.50	309.00	+ 3.30	2.97
Global Opps	73.81	78.31	+ 1.50	0.51
Japan	84.93	90.83	− 2.61	.
Managed Inc	49.25	52.30†	+ 0.42	4.29
Mastertrust	174.00	186.10	+ 2.70	1.29
US Emerging Cos	175.80	188.00	+ 8.30	.
Ethical	87.04	92.60	+ 1.00	1.59
International	136.30	145.00	+ 1.90	0.80
Dividend & Growth	73.10	77.77	+ 1.06	4.32
Global Gwth & Sec	75.08	80.09	+ 0.17	2.52
Latin America	82.30	87.55	+ 2.66	0.45
Capital Reserve	148.30	148.40	+ 0.20	4.71

ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0141 275 8500

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
N&P UK Growth	97.34	103.50	+ 1.40	2.32
Equity Income	137.10	145.80	+ 1.70	4.13
Extra Income	265.40	282.30	+ 3.20	6.39
Smaller Cos	112.90	120.10†	+ 0.80	1.50
International	116.60	124.00	+ 1.50	1.40

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
UK Small Cos	2537.00	2637.00	+10.00	.

ABTRUST UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0800 833 580

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Aber Inc & Growth	62.54	64.97†	+ 1.31	.
Emerging Mkts	77.35	80.56	+ 0.88	0.04
European	163.30	169.80	+ 3.80	.
Extra Income #	51.48	54.18†	+ 0.71	8.00
Far East Emg Eco	126.40	132.60	+ 1.80	0.47
Fixed Interest #	26.63	27.70	+ 0.11	8.77
Fixed Inv Tst #	163.80	171.80†	− 0.60	9.67
Japan	152.50	158.50	− 1.40	
Latin American	70.77	73.65	+ 2.48	0.66
Pacific	79.70	83.67†	+ 1.47	0.31
Property Share	81.59	85.66	+ 1.70	2.05
UK Emerging Cos	71.61	77.39	+ 0.16	1.24
UK Growth	59.05	61.51†	+ 0.97	1.91
Aber World Port #	85.58	87.51	+ 1.16	2.84
Ethical	80.96	84.22	+ 0.51	2.10
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.10	50.14†	+ 0.19	7.39

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 258 5968

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Resdl Property #	99.36	105.70†	...	5.97

ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD
01452 305 958

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Pacific Portfolio	157.82	169.70	+ 3.59	0.79
UK Equity	103.37	110.35†	+ 1.24	3.24
UK Equity & Bd	61.11	64.75	+ 0.64	6.28
UK Smlr Cos	54.80	58.62†	+ 0.57	1.62

CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS
0171 588 1815

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Inv Fd Inc	809.72	821.98	+ 4.73	4.19
Inv Fd Acc	809.72	821.98	+ 4.73	...
Fxd Int Sec Inc	155.60	156.21	+ 0.13	9.16
Fxd Int Sec Acc	155.96	156.21	+ 0.13	

COIF CHARITY FUNDS
0171 588 1815

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Investment Inc	800.91	813.01	− 8.59	4.26
Investment Acc	£37.76	£38.33	− 1.90	
Fixed Int Inc	128.20	126.70	− 2.50	9.16
Fixed Int Acc	240.07	241.03	+ 0.76	..

CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD
0171 407 5966

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Beckman Intl	64.35	68.66	− 0.14	5.63
Buck Bio-Tech	39.60	43.09	+ 1.73	...
Acorn Ethical Tst	185.54	194.83	+ 1.65	0.44
City Fin Assets	81.43	85.51†	+ 0.27	1.80
City Fin Intl	88.38	92.61	+ 1.12	0.14
Friars Hse Cap	320.33	340.78	+ 3.11	2.33
Buckley Wrld Gth	137.76	148.03†	− 2.29	...
J Std Inc/Gth Inc	59.00	61.96	+ 1.23	3.35
Shaw Utilities	65.70	69.21	+ 2.13	6.49

CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Emerging Markets	60.51	64.20	+ 1.34	.

CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD
0345 772 233

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
American Gwth	79.29	84.35	+ 2.19	...
Dragon Growth	70.07	74.94	+ 1.40	0.39
Equity High Inc	98.52	104.25†	+ 0.69	3.66
-do- Accum	144.43	152.83	+ 1.01	3.66
Extra Income Inc	26.59	28.08†	+ 0.12	7.20
Extra Income Acc	30.09	31.69	+ 0.13	7.20
European Gwth	67.56	71.51	+ 1.47	0.49
Evergreen	30.80	32.94	+ 0.65	...
General Equity	115.88	122.30	+ 2.17	2.63
Japan Growth	38.39	38.71	− 1.32	
Pedigree Gwth	68.52	72.50	+ 0.35	2.14
Pad Sm Cos Inc	41.47	43.88	+ 0.38	1.15
-do- Accum	44.21	46.78	+ 0.39	1.15
Retirement Inc #	30.06	31.98	+ 0.55	5.49
Special Sits	50.55	54.35	+ 0.73	2.62
UK & Overseas	62.21	65.83	+ 0.87	0.66

COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD
01634 898 000

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Balanced	74.48	77.58	+ 0.81	3.98
Capital	89.52	93.24	+ 0.73	2.36
High Income	52.73	54.92	+ 0.29	6.74
Top 50	61.56	64.12	+ 0.90	2.51

COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD
0181 686 9818
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	204.03	212.56†	+ 2.90	4.32
Long Gilt	43.66	45.46†	+ 0.23	6.24
Monthly Inc Plus	51.30	53.44†	+ 0.26	6.39
Preference Share	48.40	50.42†	+ 0.19	7.73
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	148.56	154.77†	+ 2.29	5.51
Managed Fund	78.52	81.80†	+ 0.85	2.71
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	55.39	57.70†	− 1.70	1.65
-do- Accum	68.24	69.01†	− 2.03	1.65
UK & General	105.30	109.70†	− 0.05	2.75
-do- Accum	139.59	145.42†	− 0.07	2.75
UK Growth	213.26	222.17†	+ 2.84	1.26
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	227.06	236.55†	+ 2.74	0.61
Far Eastern Gth	124.01	129.19†	+ 1.11	0.03
Global Bond	72.71	75.75†	− 0.07	6.54
Japan Growth	90.69	94.48†	− 1.31	

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
New Japan	71.48	75.42	− 4.24	

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD
0171 581 3020

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
World Health	184.70	198.40	+ 9.20	
Income #	241.86	257.28	+ 1.88	4.03
UK Growth	94.30	100.31	+ 0.72	1.84
Intl Growth	89.87	95.60	+ 0.83	0.59
Ecology	111.26	118.36†	+ 2.57	0.88
European	227.76	242.29	+ 3.16	0.21
Far Eastern	306.30	325.80	+ 4.20	.
UK Special Sits	59.88	63.87†	+ 0.62	0.38
Fd of Inv Tsts	56.02	59.75	+ 0.68	..
High Income #	54.47	58.10†	+ 0.63	4.82

MGM UNIT MANAGERS LTD
Dealing: 01277 261 010 Enq: 01903 204 631

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European Growth	109.12	116.08†	+ 2.75	0.50
Intl Bond	62.40	65.56	+ 0.17	4.80
Intl Equity Growth	85.85	91.25	+ 1.07	0.64
N Amer Growth	143.98	152.94†	+ 2.99	0.83
Special Sits Growth	30.38	32.29†	+ 0.43	2.07
UK Growth	495.91	527.56†	+ 7.02	2.50
-do- Accum	691.77	735.92	+ 9.79	2.50

NM JOINT INVESTORS LTD
01820 825667

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Balanced Fd #	1466.40	1488.90	+15.50	3.30
Income #	1068.40	1084.80	+11.60	4.80

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Dealers: 0171 956 7354

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Income Trusts				
Bond Income	100.90	104.30†	− 0.70	6.99
Euro Ptfo Inc	109.10	116.10	+ 1.00	2.75
-do- Accum	109.10	116.10	+ 1.00	2.75
Gilt Yield	118.70	125.20†	+ 0.30	6.46
Global Income	235.80	250.90	+ 1.90	3.18
High Yield	168.90	179.60†	+ 3.10	5.19
-do- Accum	569.10	605.43†	+10.60	5.19
Money Market	99.45	99.45†	+ 0.08	5.51
Smlr Cos Div	68.30	72.66	+ 1.35	3.56
Tomorrows Co Ex Acc	10.26	10.41	+ 0.19	
Capital Growth Trusts				
Amer Smlr Cos	152.50	162.20	+ 4.00	
Asian Growth	312.10	332.06	− 4.10	

MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 222 4242

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Maldon General	182.40	186.30		3.33

MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD
0800 363432

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
High Inc #	95.30	98.24	+ 0.64	.
M & S Inv Ptflo	185.20	192.00	+ 2.00	2.35
-do- Accum	223.30	230.10	+ 2.30	2.35
UK Sel Ptflo	169.30	174.50	+ 2.30	2.24
-do- Accum	206.10	212.50	+ 2.90	2.24
UK 100 Cos	127.10	127.10†	+ 1.70	2.50
-do- Accum	130.30	130.30†	+ 1.70	2.50

MARLBOROUGH FUND MGRS LTD
01204 364 842

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Managed Int	71.02	75.56	+ 0.40	3.54

Shares retreat on US worries

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
469	407½	Allied Domecq	431	-5	6.8	13.0
826	547½	Bulmer (HP)	581	-7½	2.9	17.3
75½	57½	Burn Stewart	60		7.1	14.9
1040	865	Glenmorangie A	1000		1.5	27.2
506	425½	Grand Met	499½	-½	4.0	16.1
518½	424	Guinness	501	-5½	4.0	14.3
380	334	Highland Distl	344		3.0	16.0
336	257	Matthew Clark	334½		9.0	16.0
109½	90½	Macdonald M	91½	+1	6.3	12.4
1976½	1482½	SA Breweries	1868½	-9½	1.9	

BANKS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
4706½	3671½	ABN-AMRO	3950	-68½	2.9	16.5
811	710	Abbey Natl	778½	+4	4.2	13.8
455½	388½	Allied Irish	427½	+1	4.2	
409½	363½	Aus New Z	374½	-½	5.1	
7679½	5753½	Bank America	6500	-68½		
373½	291½	Bank Scotland	317½	-5	2.9	11.6
1228	978½	Barclays	1036½	-14½	3.8	10.5
635	517½	Bk of Ireland	613	+2½	3.4	13.9
7890½	6006½	Citicorp	6778½	-171½		
1731½	1268½	Commerzbk	1653½	-12½	2.6	
862½	559½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	575	+16½	0.7	
3490½	2709½	Deutsche Bk	3178½	-65½	2.0	
912½	759½	Espirito Santo	803½		3.8	12.6
872½	594½	Fuji Bank Y	603½	+9½	0.7	
1622	1272½	HSBC	1492	-16	3.4	12.9
1563½	1241	HSBC HK	1441½	-13	3.6	12.5
605	483½	Irish Perm	578	+10½	2.8	
534	424	Lloyds TSB	504½	-12	3.3	16.3
819½	668½	Nat Aust Bk	776	+1½	5.4	10.4
844½	656	Nat West	688½	-10½	5.3	10.5
632½	508	Ryl Bk Scot	530	-19½	4.4	11.7
900½	681	Stand Chart	838	-16	2.2	15.0
£164½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164½		1.9	
374½	317	Westpac	317	-3½	4.3	10.2

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
878½	793½	Bass	807½	-7	3.9	15.9
68½	53½	Bth for the Bor	53½		4.0	14.6
205	170½	Burtonwood Brw	184½		3.8	16.6
155½	137½	City Centre Rest	142½	-½	2.2	
744½	612½	Compass Grp	682½	+1	1.6	27.0
290½	250	Eldridge P A	250		2.4	17.2
485	435	Fuller Sm A	482½		2.4	16.1
586	508½	Greenalls Grp	525	-4	3.7	16.5
750	643	Greene King	701		2.9	17.3
237½	164½	Grosvenor Inns	193½		3.9	18.7
285	218½	Groupe Chez Ger	254	-2½	1.6	22.9
298½	273½	Hardy Hanson	278	-½	4.8	12.6
2825	2700	Holt J	2787½		2.6	35.0
78	63½	Inn Business	73		2.7	
357	343	Mansfield	351½		2.2	16.2
315½	252	Marston Thmp	283½	+5	3.3	10.6

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
465½	387½	Electrocomponents	397½	-1½	2.2	24.1
226½	162½	Eurodis Elec	169	-3½	3.7	34.1
33½	7½	European Mtr	8½		7.5	9.0
263	220	Evans Halshaw	237½	+4	8.7	
53½	41	File Indexes	45	+1½	9.7	
397½	327½	Fenner Grp	350		2.1	17.8
34½	27½	Gardiner	29½		4.0	11.3
79½	57½	Glendevon	65½	+1	2.6	17.6
110	82½	Gowrings	96		3.9	
100	82	Hanfg	90½	-½	8.4	8.5
267½	239½	Harris (Philip)	247½		4.4	15.1
320½	284½	Headlam	310½		2.4	
156	148	Holdrys Tech	150		5.4	
240½	209	ISA Intl	227½	+1	1.6	
285	240½	Inchcape	249	-½	4.3	14.4
53½	49½	Jacks (Wm)	52½		4.8	18.1
246½	214½	Kwik-Fit	237	-½	3.0	17.0
367	316½	Lex Service	340	+1	5.9	11.2
122	102	Lookers	103		9.7	6.9
14½	11	Malaya Grp	13		6.3	11.8
8	5½	Middlesex	7½		1.3	11.4
41½	31½	Metalrax	35		0.9	
472	229	Nolton	253	-1	4.0	7.0
166½	131½	Northamber	144		1.2	8.6
352½	305½	Parity	329½	+3	3.0	
404½	342½	Pendragon	366½		3.4	17.0
223½	190½	Perry Grp	205		5.6	
751	455	Premier Farnell	492½	+10	2.9	19.2
152½	126	Quicks Group	126	-2½	6.9	
348	307½	REA	315		1.6	37.8
2½	2	Reece	2			
28	18½	Roncon	20		3.4	6.9
4	2½	Ross Gp	3			
109½	78½	Ryland	91½	+1	5.5	16.4
38	35½	SEP Indl	36½		8.3	7.1
92½	55	Saltire	69		1.8	22.4
415½	377½	Time Products	386		3.6	15.8
270	228	UMECO	245	+5	2.4	17.6
352½	292½	Vardy (Reg)	332½		2.6	14.6
660	498½	WF Electl	625		2.7	22.7
41	31½	Wilshaw	35		3.0	10.3
172½	137½	Wykes	149½		2.2	17.5
154½	119½	Young (H)	135½		3.9	11.7

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
420	327½	Autotopia	387	+2	1.7	
328	283½	Ascot Hldgs	295	-1	2.2	
876	790	Broken Hill	812½	-2½	3.0	18.3
289	237½	BTR	250½	-4	4.9	13.8
568	462	BAT	511	+1	6.4	10.8
195½	178	Bibby (J)	188	-½	5.0	10.9
60½	53½	Brierley Inv	53½	-½	8.8	8.8
856½	715	Charter	777½		4.7	11.0
366	215	Cookson	213½	-2½	5.0	13.4
229½	200½	Cosalt	205½		6.0	9.9
312½	255½	DCC	295		2.9	11.7
133	115½	Grampian Hdg	121		6.5	12.5
140½	124½	Harrisons Crsfld	128		9.2	11.4
509½	423½	Hutch Whamp	449	+5	2.2	18.6
438½	375	Imperial Tobacco	413	-½	6.1	8.3
397½	340	Jardine Math	340	-8	4.5	

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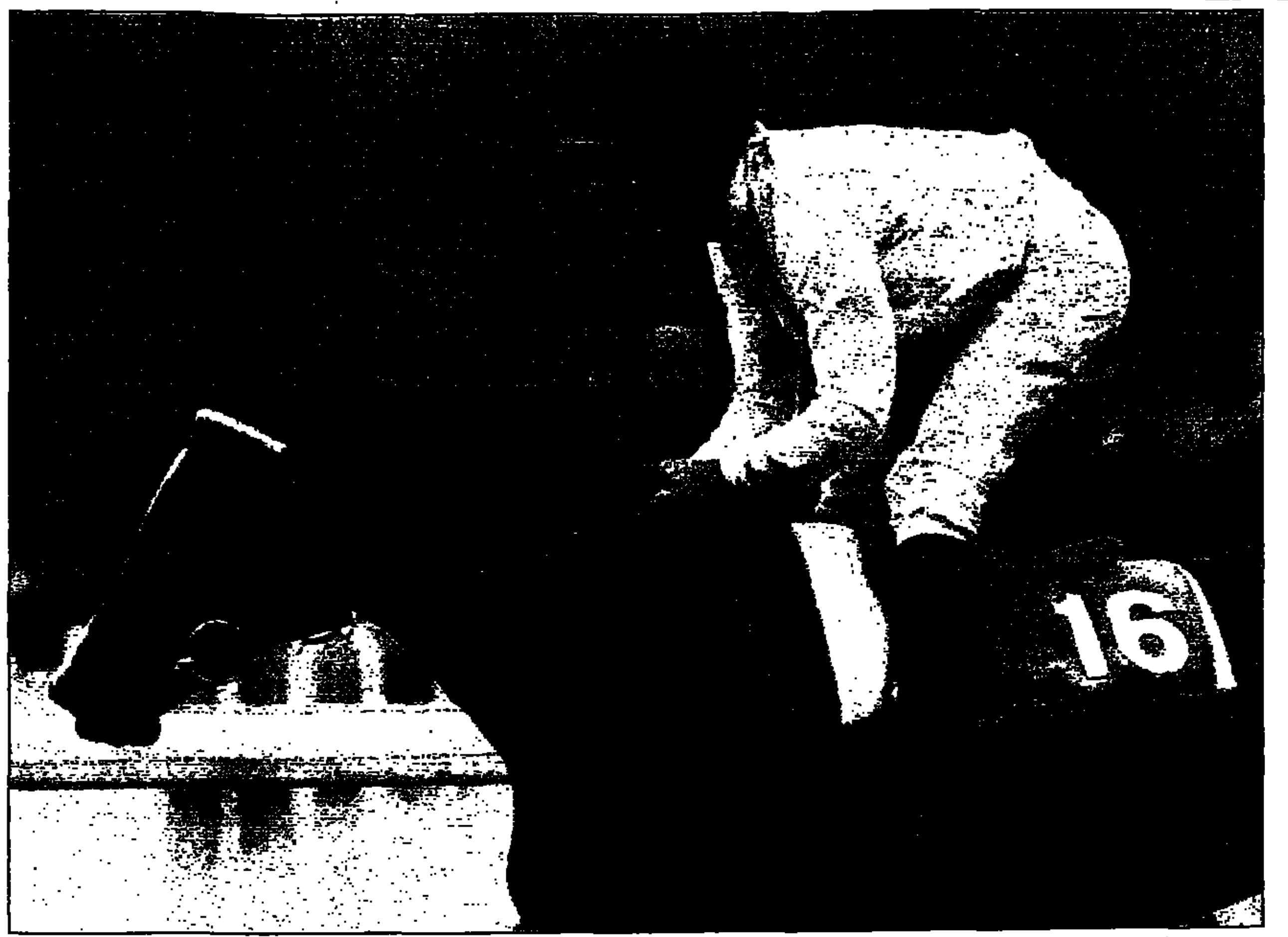
RACING: WORKWATCHERS ON DAWN PATROL AS CECIL-TRAINED FILLY FACES CRUCIAL GALLOP

Early risers in search of Sleepytime

By Julian Muscat


Sleepytime must please in a weekend workout to run in the Fred Darling Stakes. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

WORKWATCHERS at Newmarket will be out in force this weekend when Sleepytime, whose midweek absence from the gallops alarmed supporters of the 1,000 Guineas favourite, resumes fast work in preparation for the fillies' classic on May 4.

After three days on the easy list, Sleepytime must come through a strenuous workout to secure her place in the Fred Darling Stakes, her selected prep race at Newbury on Friday. Tote Cherry-Downes, racing manager to Sleepytime's owner, Greenbay Stables, said yesterday the hold-up had not compromised her prospects, and that the filly never succumbed to the lung infection afflicting a small minority of Henry Cecil's string.

"I expect she will work this weekend — possibly on Sunday if Henry wants an extra day before galloping her," Cherry-Downes said. "She was trotting around Side Hill on Thursday and was out again on Friday so it is not as if she has been inactive.

"Sleepytime has always been totally clear of any problem and recent tests have reconfirmed that," he continued. "If you work horses when they're affected, then you can ruin them. It is good stable practice to test others if one horse shows up with mucus on the lungs. That is all Henry was doing."

Sleepytime's full-brother, Ali-Royal, is to contest the Earl Of Sefton Stakes at Newmarket on Wednesday — although Cherry-Downes said the four-year-old goes best with cut in the ground.

Cecil's two runners at Nottingham yesterday failed to collect. Courtship ran disappointingly behind Sekari in the Levy Board Stakes but Barrier Ridge fared better in the Bassingfield Maiden Stakes, chasing home the more experienced China Red. Doubtless there will be relief all round when Cecil posts his first winner of the present campaign.

No such tribulations surround Criquette Head's stable in Chantilly. Mme Head yesterday expressed herself "very satisfied" with her 1,000 Guineas candidate, Pas De Reponse, who galloped to a bloodless victory in the three-runner Prix Imprudence over seven furlongs at Maisons-Laffitte.

The Danzig filly made all to win by 2½ lengths from Barnata, prompting Ladbrokes to trim Pas De Reponse's classic odds to 6-1, from a point longer. "She does everything so easily at home that I told Freddie [Head] to make sure she had a good bit of work today," Mme Head said. "She should be in perfect shape for the 1,000 Guineas. I couldn't be happier."

There was British success in the colts' equivalent, the Prix Djebel, when Clive Brittain's raider, Fantastic Fellow, made all to beat Nombre Premier comfortably by threequarters of a length. Tomba, from Brian Meehan's stable, was fourth.

Fantastic Fellow may return to France for the Poule d'Essai des Poulains, although the colt is also entered at Newmarket. Brittain said his charge had thrived over the winter but this victory paid tribute to Bahamian Bounty, who had Fantastic Fellow just over a length back in fourth place in the Middle Park Stakes. Now trained by Godolphin, Bahamian Bounty is expected to line up in the French classic on his return from Dubai.

Fantastic Fellow was yesterday among six late entrants to the Derby at Epsom in June. His prospects of staying 12 furlongs are minimal but he joins Desert King, Johan Cruyff, Latalomne, Panama City and Revoque, the champion juvenile of Europe, in the Derby melting pot. Owners of the sextet contributed an extra £64,000 in entry fees towards the event, which is expected to carry prize-money of £1 million for the first time.

Crack On to make further progress

ASCOT
BBC1

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

2.00: Serious should not be taken lightly, but his two wins over hurdles have come on the much sharper Uttoxeter circuit and he had stamina limitations on the Flat. **Crack On**, who jumped sketchily on his chasing debut, returns to hurdling still on a handy mark. Well suited by a stiff, right-handed track, he can overcome a 7lb higher mark than for his win at Sandown in November, when value for much more than a 2½-length margin. Alltime Dancer has struggled in handicaps this term after a prolific season as a juvenile, but the assessor is at last relenting.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: NINEACRES
(9.30 Wolverhampton)
Next best: Bertone
(2.35 Ascot)

2.35: Storm Alert is in his element round here but his best form is at two miles. Stamina is also a worry for Super Tactics, who has won at 2½ miles but shown better form at the minimum. There are no such fears over Amtrak Express and Bertone, who are set to battle this out. Amtrak Express, who was left in the Grand National until the five-day stage, is best in small fields and when fresh. He gained his only success of last term over three miles at Sandown and ran well in the Whitbread there, so today's journey is probably shorter than ideal. **Bertone** is preferred after travelling supremely well for a long way over an extended three miles at Aintree. That bit younger and more progressive than his rivals, Kim Bailey's gelding returns to his best distance and looks fairly treated off the same handicap mark.

3.10: Trainglot, the winner of almost £200,000 in prize-money, runs his last race today. The ten-year-old has often been campaigned in the highest class, and faces much easier opposition than when seventh to Karshi in the Stayers' Hurdle at Cheltenham last time out. He should sign off on a winning note, but the possibility he is not the force of old precludes maximum confidence. It would be an open race if the favourite fails to deliver.

JAMES WILLOUGHBY

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13/8	Serious
4/1	Crack on
9/2	Albemine
13/2	Dancing Paddy
7/1	Faustino
12/1	Alltime Dancer
12/1	Holy Wanderer
33/1	I'm A Dreamer
33/1	Nashville Star

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YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Nottingham

Going: good to firm

2.10 (1m 54yd) 1, Princess Of Hearts (B Doyle, 4-1); 2, Aficionado (2-1 fav); 3, Mardrew (6-1) 12 ran 1½l, ¾l. B Meehan Tote: £4.60, £4.40, £1.10, £3.30 DF £7.60. Trio: £12.70 CSF: £12.33 Sold for 5,000gns

2.40 (1m 54yd) 1, China Red (M Hills, 3-1 jt-fav); 2, Barrier Ridge (4-1); 3, Speculator (13-2) Insal 3-1 jt-fav 13 ran ½l, 2l J Hills Tote: £3.60; £1.70, £1.50, £2.50. DF: £6.00. Trio: £23.90 CSF: £13.77

3.10 (1m 54yd) 1; Sekari (L Dettori, 11-8 fav, Richard Evans's nap and Newmarket Correspondent's nap); 2, Crystal Hearted (5-1); 3, Sandstone (5-2). 7 ran. NR: Premier Bay. ½l, 1¼l D Loder. Tote: £2.20; £1.80, £2.30. DF: £8.80 CSF: £10.02.

3.40 (1m 1f 213yd) 1, White Plains (R Mullen, 15-2), 2, Absolutelystunning (33-1); 3, Peppers (10-1); 4, Master Beveled (12-1) Nigel's Lad 7-2 fav 17 ran NR: Eagle Canyon. ½l, 1¾l M Pipe. Tote: £11.00; £3.80, £4.90, £3.00, £1.90 DF: £147.70. Trio: £570.40 (part won; pool of £731.18 carried forward to 3.30 at today) CSF: £236.87. Tricast: £2,336.30.

4.10 (6f 13yd) 1, Dim Ots (J Quinn, 11-2); 2, Theatre Of Dreams (6-1), 3, Sea Imp (8-1) Conectis 9-2 jt-fav 14 ran. ½l, 3l. B Palling. Tote £9.60; £3.30, £1.90, £1.70 DF: £33.90. Trio: £189.60 CSF £40.81

4.40 (6f 15yd) 1, Treasure Touch (Iona Wands, 100-30 fav); 2, Always Alight (33-1); 3, Master Foley (10-1); 4, Jupiter (5-1). 17 ran. 3½l, hd D Nicholls. Tote: £3.80; £1.20, £15.40, £3.70, £1.60 DF £147.70. Trio: £705.60 CSF: £135.06 Tricast £737.83

5.10 (1m 6f 15yd) 1, Dancing Cavalier (Pat Eddery, 5-1); 2, Road Racer (3-1 fav); 3, Chabrol (6-1) 12 ran. 4l, nk. R Hollinshead. Tote £5.10; £2.40, £1.10, £2.40 DF £9.40 Trio: £16.60 CSF: £19.57 Tricast: £88.22

Jackpot: not won (pool of £24,002.19 carried forward to Warwick today).

Placepot: £54.40. Quadpot: £25.50.

Beverley

Going: good to firm

2.20 (5f) 1, The Best Rolls On (D Sweeney, 11-1); 2, Hopefully (3-1), 3, Captain Bliss (9-4 fav) 10 ran Nk, ¾l M Meade Tote £19.10; £3.20, £1.10, £1.70. DF: £29.40 Trio £95.20 CSF £45.37 Sold for 6,600gns

2.50 (2m 35yd) 1, Kinoko (L Charnock, 11-4 fav), 2, Shirley Sue (6-1); 3, Romaldo (11-1) 11 ran 1l, ¾l K Hogg Tote: £3.50; £1.10, £2.60, £2.60 DF: £11.40 Trio £66.80 CSF £17.64. Tricast £147.44

3.20 (1m 1f 207yd) 1, Gymcrak Premiere (N Connorton, 14-1); 2, Phikstar (10-1), 3, Night Of Glass (11-2 fav). 11 ran. ½l, 4l. G Holmes Tote £16.70; £2.80, £3.20, £1.70 DF £100.50 Trio £271.10 CSF £136.13 Tricast: £796.44

3.50 (7f 100yd) 1, Jay-Owe-Two (D McKeown, 5-2). 2, The Wyandotte Inn (7-1). 3, Wagga Moon (20-1). Sharpo Wassl 9-4 fav 9 ran ¾l, 2l R Whitaker Tote: £3.20, £1.40, £2.40, £4.30 DF £14.33 Trio £157.20 CSF £19.15 Tricast £263.42

4.20 (7f 100yd) 1 Night Dance (R Ffrench, 11-2), 2, No More Pressure (7-1) 3, Smarter Charter (5-1) Magic Mill 7-4 fav 7 ran. ½l, hd K Morgan Tote £6.00 £2.20 £3.60 DF £20.20 CSF £40.12

4.50 (5f) 1, Prince Dome (J Carroll 5-1), 2, Marylebone (4-1); 3 Archello (7-2) The Gay Fox 11-4 fav 9 ran NR Jesa Knight. Nk, 3½l M Wane Tote £5.20 £1.20 £1.20 £1.80 DF £10.70 Trio £9.90 CSF £23.87

Placepot £498.10. Quadpot £88.10.

Brighton

Going: firm

2.00 (5f 59yd) 1 Bannungham Blade (Martin Dwyer, 5-2). 2, Prince Foley (8-11 fav) 3 Scit Touch (4-1) 3 ran. Sh hd, 5l. K Ivory Tote £3.50 DF £1.60 CSF £4.33

2.30 (5f 213yd) 1 Sizzling (Dane O'Neill, 7-2). 2, Justinianus (16-1). 3 Jo Maximus (9-4 fav) 12 ran NR: Petraco 2½l ¾l R Hannon Tote £4.90; £2.00 £4.70 £1.40 DF. £45.00 Trio £80.00 CSF: £52.96

3.00 (7f 214yd) 1, Sharp Shuffle (Dane O'Neill, 10-11 fav), 2 Stellar Line (10-1); 3, Gulliver (7-1) 5 ran Nk, 1¼l R Hannon. Tote £1.70; £1.20 £3.10 DF £3.60 CSF £9.96

3.30 (1m 3f 196yd) 1, Yet Again (S Sanders, 11-10 fav) 2, Duncombe Hall (8-1), 3 Sapphire Son (20-1) 9 ran 1l 9l Miss G Kelleway Tote. £1.80; £1.50 £1.40 £2.50 DF £5.70 Trio £26.70 CSF £8.76. Tricast £100.88

4.00 (1m 1f 209yd) 1, Here's To Howie (W J O'Connor, 3-1); 2, High On Life (15-8 jt-fav) 3. Kalmat (15-8 jt-fav) 7 ran Nk, 1½l R Hannon Tote £3.80, £1.80, £1.20 DF £3.70 CSF £8.48.

4.30 (7f 214yd) 1, Boster (M Fenton, 3-1 jt-fav). 2, First Chance (3-1 jt-fav); 3, Interdream (6-1) 9 ran Sh hd, 2½l D Morley. Tote £6.30 £2.30, £1.30, £1.90 DF £5.50 Trio £54.30. CSF. £11.15 Tricast £47.52

5.00 (5f 213yd) 1, Spender (J Reid 3-1); 2 Apollo Red (11-4 fav) 3, Without Friends (16-1) 9 ran ½l, 1½l P Harris. Tote £3.60; £1.50 £1.10, £3.00 DF £5.90 Trio £29.90 CSF £11.90 Tricast £110.38

Placepot £48.20. Quadpot £8.40.

RACELINE

0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS

	COMMENTARY	RESULTS
ASCOT	101	201
WARWICK	102	202
SEDGEFIELD	103	203
N. ABBOT	104	204
W'HAMPTON	105	205
IRISH	120	220

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WARWICK

THUNDERER
1.50 Salamanca. 2.25 Hype Energy. 3.00 Power Game. 3.30 Zaima. 4.00 Embryonic. 4.35 Darb Alola. 5.05 Nosey Native.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 5.05 **KEDWICK.**

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW: 5F, LOW NUMBERS BEST SIS

1.50 EUROPEAN BREEDERS FUND HATTON NOVICE STAKES (2-Y-O: £3,152: 5f) (7 runners)

101 (3) 1 RISING OF THE MOON 21 (D,F) R Hannon 8-13 Pat Eddery 98
102 (1) 1 SALAMANCA 16 (D,G) J Berry 8-9 P Fessey (5) ⊞
103 (5) 04 DAWN PATROL 4 K Hogg 8-7 D McKeown 81
104 (4) FLEET LADY Mrs P Dutfield 8-7 S Drowne –
105 (7) FRUNDIN Mrs W Allen 8-7 L Newton –
106 (2) MAI TAI Mrs P Dutfield 8-7 D Holland –
107 (6) ZIELANA GORA S Williams 8-7 K Darley –

5-4 Rising Of The Moon, 7-4 Salamanca, 7-1 Dawn Patrol, 12-1 Zielana Gora, 16-1 Mai Tai, Fleet Lady, 20-1 Frundin.

2.25 WARWICK SPRING HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £2,940: 5f) (12)

201 (5) 025- HYPE ENERGY 207 G Lewis 9-7 Paul Eddery 98
302 (1) 3-22 MANGUS 59 K Cunningham-Brown 9-7 T Quinn 95
203 (7) 0116 C-HARRY 12 (D,G,S) R Hollinshead 9-4 M Wigham 98
204 (11) 40-1 LOCH-HURN LADY 17 (D,G) K Hogg 9-4 K Darley 91
205 (4) 313- ANOKATO 191 (B,D,F) K Ivory 9-3 Martin Dwyer (3) 87
206 (10) 006- BRAMBLE BEAR 191 (D,F) M Blanshard 9-3 J Quinn 89
207 (6) 00-0 SARABI 16 (D,G) J Pearce 8-13 G Teague (3) 96
208 (8) 200- ROYAL EMBLEM 151 A Foster 8-9 R Perham 93
209 (2) 4002 SUITE FACTORS 2 (D,F) K Burke 8-5 J F Egan ⊞
210 (12) 040- WILD NETTLE 152 J Fox 8-3 A Clark 92
211 (3) 000- LITTLE PROGRESS 120 T Jones 7-10 N Carlisle –
212 (9) 5633 IMPISH 10 T Etherington 7-10 J Bramhill (5) 93

4-1 Hype Energy, 9-2 Loch-Hurn Lady, 5-1 Anokato, Mangus, 7-1 C-Harry, Bramble Bear, 10-1 Suite Factors, 12-1 others.

3.00 DUNSMORE CLAIMING STAKES (£2,944: 1m) (14)

301 (13) 65-2 BROUGHTONS TURMOIL 16 (D,BF,F,G) B Millman 8-9-7 W J O'Connor 91
302 (7) -430 ETHBAAT 19 (D,F,G) M Heaton-Ellis 6-9-7 A Clark 82
303 (2) 4234 STAR TALENT 74 (C,BF,F,G,S) Miss G Kelleway 6-9-7 R Cochrane 92
304 (5) 01-4 POWER GAME 7 (B,D,F,G) J Berry 4-9-1 K Darley 86
305 (3) 000- KING ATHELSTAN 129J (F) B McMahon 9-8-13 T Quinn ⊞
306 (8) 6000 MANABAR 16 (D,G) M Polglase 5-8-9 T G McLaughlin 89
307 (14) /00 CHINOUR 17 (D,F,G) E Alston 9-8-7 K Fallon 57
308 (11) 00/ KINGS VISION 24J (G) W Jenks 5-8-5 Dane O'Neill –
309 (10) 0260 LORDAN VELVET 11 Mrs W Allen 5-8-5 L Newton 75
310 (1) /00- PROVE THE POINT 10J Mrs P Dutfield 4-8-4 S Drowne –
311 (6) 00-0 CHALKY DANCER 12 H Collingridge 5-8-3 J Quinn 69
312 (12) 600- COURTING NEWMARKET 276 (F,G) Miss K George 9-8-3 J Bramhill (5) 67
313 (4) 00-6 CLUED UP 7 (V,F) P Evans 4-8-0 J F Egan 81
314 (9) 0 RIVER ENSIGN 16 W Brisbourne 4-7-12 R Mullen (5) –

11-4 Star Talent, 3-1 Broughtons Turmoil, 7-1 Power Game, 8-1 King Athelstan, 10-1 Ethbaat, Clued Up, 12-1 others.

3.30 WELLESBOURNE HANDICAP (3-Y-O: £7,458: 1m) (13)

401 (9) 426- HALOWING 189 (F) J Smyth-Osbourne 9-7 S Sanders 90
402 (4) 141- WHAT HAPPENED WAS 204 (F) M Meade 9-6 D Sweeney (5) 92
403 (3) 631- COSMIC PRINCE 192 (G) M Janes 9-5 R Cochrane 95
404 (8) 113- BRANDON JACK 199 (G,S) I Balding 9-4 Pat Eddery 92
405 (10) 13-3 ZAIMA 16 (F) J Dunlop 9-3 K Darley 95
406 (5) 413- MY BELOVED 260 (F) R Hannon 9-1 Dane O'Neill 89
407 (13) 4-06 I CAN'T REMEMBER 21 (D,F,G,S) P Evans 8-13 J F Egan 93
408 (2) 30-1 STRATHMORE CLEAR 12 (F) G Lewis 8-11 Paul Eddery 96
409 (1) 00-0 DOUBLE GOLD 21 (B,C,F,G) B Meehan 8-10 G Hannon (7) 90
410 (6) 34-4 WILD SKY 21 M Heaton-Ellis 8-10 S Drowne 98
411 (12) 00-2 LAST CHANCE 16 (F) D Cosgrove 8-3 N Carlisle 97
412 (7) 55-4 BOLLIN TERRY 21 T Easterby 8-0 L Charnock 93
413 (11) 1152 PUZZLEMENT 14 (D,BF,G) C Brittain 8-0 J Lowe ⊞

7-2 Zaima, 4-1 Strathmore Clear, 8-1 Brandon Jack, What Happened Was, 10-1 Cosmic Prince, My Beloved, Puzzlement 12-1 others

4.00 MARTON HANDICAP (£5,038: 1m 6f 194yd) (7)

501 (5) 30-0 THALJANAH 22 (F,G) B Smart 5-9-10 R Cochrane 93
502 (2) 251- PALAMON 12J (F) J White 4-9-9 W J O'Connor 97
503 (7) 2-23 STAR RAGE 11J (C,D,BF,F,G) J L Harris 7-9-8 K Fallon 94
504 (6) 60-3 EMBRYONIC 17 (F) M Todhunter 5-9-4 J Carroll ⊞
505 (3) 413- BOWCLIFFE COURT 63J (G,S) R Akehurst 5-9-2 T Quinn 96
506 (1) 65-4 UPPER MOUNT CLAIR 22 (F,G) C Brittain 7-9-1 B Doyle 98
507 (4) 03-3 ETTERBY PARK 4 (D,F,G,S) M Johnston 4-9-0 J Weaver 98

9-4 Bowcliffe Court, 9-2 Palamon, 5-1 Upper Mount Clair, 6-1 Star Rage, Embryonic, Etterby Park, 10-1 Thaljanah.

4.35 OLD MILVERTON MAIDEN STAKES (£3,462: 5f) (6)

601 (2) 00/ CAPTAIN SINBAD 593 (B) K Bridgwater 5-9-7 S Drowne –
602 (5) 335- CHANGED TO BAILEYS 191 J Berry 3-8-10 G Carter 73
603 (1) 262- DARB ALOLA 166 M Stoute 3-8-10 J Reid ⊞
604 (6) 240- HOH DANCER 231 I Balding 3-8-5 Pat Eddery 79
605 (3) 0- LA CHATELAINE 166 G Lewis 3-8-5 Paul Eddery –
606 (4) SOVEREIGN M Muggeridge 3-8-5 M Henry (3) –

1-2 Darb Alola, 7-2 Hoh Dancer, 6-1 Changed To Baileys, 10-1 La Chatelaine, 33-1 Sovereign, 40-1 Captain Sinbad

5.05 KINETON HANDICAP (£3,667: 1m 2f 169yd) (12)

1 (2) 60-2 VOLA VIA 12 (F) I Balding 4-9-10 Martin Dwyer (3) 95
2 (1) 10-0 OCEAN PARK 30 (F,G) Lady Herries 6-9-4 A Clark 90
3 (12) /10- CAROL'S DREAM 156 (G) J Hills 5-9-2 M Henry (3) 87
4 (3) 0-10 ANGEL FACE 23 (G) P Evans 4-9-0 J F Egan 90
5 (7) -500 SUEZ TORNADO 10 (G) E Alston 4-9-0 S Drowne 98
6 (9) 53-0 PAY HOMAGE 23 (F,G) I Balding 9-8-12 R Fowley (7) 98
7 (5) 20-2 SHALATEENO 16 (G) B Millman 4-8-11 K Darley 75
8 (11) 05-0 NOSEY NATIVE 23 (F,S) J Pearce 4-8-9 M Wigham 97
9 (4) 40/ BOOKCASE 427J (D,F,G,S) D Elsworth 10-8-7 R Cochrane –
10 (8) 001- ASKERN 158 (D,F) D Haydn Jones 6-8-6 C Rutter 92
11 (10) 0-01 KEDWICK 17 (B,G) P Hedger 8-8-5 T Quinn ⊞
12 (6) 3446 HILL FARM DANCER 4 (D,F) W Brisbourne 6-8-7 R Mullen (5) 94

3-1 Vola Via, 7-2 Kedwick, 5-1 Askern, 7-1 Shalateeno, Pay Homage, 9-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: S Williams, 3 winners from 9 runners, 33.3%, Miss G Kelleway, 4 from 14, 28.6%, J Dunlop, 11 from 40, 27.5%, M Janes, 3 from 12, 25%, M Heaton-Ellis 5 from 25, 20.0%.

JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery, 10 winners from 36 rides, 27.8%; J Reid, 15 from 73, 20.5%, T Quinn, 14 from 87, 16.1%, G Carter, 14 from 89, 15.7%; A Clark, 7 from 45, 15.6%, Paul Eddery, 11 from 71, 15.5%.

SEDGEFIELD

THUNDERER
1.45 Caught At Last. 2.15 Grouse-N-Heather. 2.50 Silver Minx. 3.25 Chill Factor. 3.55 Westwell Boy. 4.25 Little Martina. 4.55 Old Bombay.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS

1.45 J R TILES MAIDEN HURDLE (£2,740: 2m 5f 110yd) (16 runners)

1 0P0 BANNER YEAR 19 T Carr 6-11-5 P Niven
2 -0P6 CARNMONEY 74 J Salerson 9-11-5 B Storey
3 5035 CAUGHT AT LAST 39 Mrs M Reveley 6-11-5 G Cahill
4 P026 KING FLY 12 Mrs S Horner-Harker 7-11-5 A Thornton
5 -P0P MATACHON 67 M Smith 7-11-5 R Supple
6 -0P6 POINT DUTY 25 (B) F Murtagh 7-11-5 A Dobbin
7 6000 PRIMITIVE HEART 38 H Johnson 5-11-5 A S Smith
8 68 SMILE PLEEZE 22 Mrs M Sisk 5-11-5 Mr S Swiers
9 00P TARTAN JOY 30 J Moore 6-11-5 Mr M H Naughton (5)
10 0 WEST LUTTON 12 M W Easterby 5-11-5 P Midgley (3)
11 2-F6 CATCH THE PIGEON 8 R Barr 8-11-0 N Smith
12 0P-P MOREFLASH 22 J Haldane 5-11-0 T Reed
13 /PP REGAL JEST 21 B Murray 7-11-0 W Dwan
14 4300 SALEM BEACH 5 M Todhunter 5-11-0 J Callaghan
15 0 AEOLUS 42 L Lloyd-James 4-10-12 E Callaghan (3)
16 U04 SHARP COMMAND 2F P Eccles 4-10-12 R Guest

3-1 Caught At Last, 4-1 Sharp Command, 5-1 King Fly, 6-1 Primitive Heart, 7-1 Catch The Pigeon, 8-1 Salem Beach, 10-1 others.

2.15 TRADE WINDOWS UK LTD HANDICAP CHASE (£3,119: 2m 110yd) (4)

1 5331 GROUSE-N-HEATHER 11 (D,F,S) P Monteith 8-11-10 A Dobbin
2 3833 REVE DE VALSE 8 (D,F,G,S) R Johnson 10-11-3 K Johnson
3 02P4 UK HYGIENE 86 (F) M Hammond 7-10-12 R Garritty
4 2P52 REBEL KING 11 (CD,F,G) M Barnes 7-10-11 S Taylor (5)

4-5 Grouse-N-Heather, 7-2 Rebel King, 5-1 Reve De Valse, UK Hygiene.

2.50 STANLEY RACING SERIES FINAL (Novices handicap hurdle: £10,504: 2m 5f 110yd) (10)

1 3112 MEADOW HYMN 12 (G) J Fitzgerald 6-12-0 P Carberry
2 1161 BRAMBLES WAY 7F (B,C,F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 8-11-12 P Niven
3 0411 SILVER MINX 8 (C,F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-13 G Lee
4 11 GOOD HAND 175F (F) S Kettlewell 11-10-6 R Garritty
5 534F RULE OUT THE REST 11 (CD,F) Mrs S Horner-Harker 6-10-3 A Thornton
6 0010 STYLISH INTERVAL 11 (C,F) N Waggott 5-10-3 A Dobbin
7 15 LONGCROFT 16F (BF,G) S Kettlewell 5-10-0 R Supple
8 216 SILENT GUEST 8 (F) M Hammond 4-10-0 D Bentley
9 P002 WHITEGATES WILLIE 8 H Johnson 5-10-0 C McCormack (7)
10 -65U I'M TYSON 8 Mrs D Sayer 9-10-0 B Storey

11-4 Brambles Way, 7-2 Meadow Hymn, 4-1 Silver Minx, 5-1 Good Hand, 7-1 Silent Guest, 8-1 Rule Out The Rest, 10-1 Longcroft, 12-1 others.

3.25 EDEN ARMS SWALLOW HOTEL CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,548: 3m 3f 110yd) (14)

1 341F SCARBA 56 (G,S) J Jefferson 9-12-0 E Callaghan
2 12F1 TROODOS 123 (CD,F,G) Mrs A Swinbank 11-12-0 B Grattan
3 00-5 FROWN 33 (S) P Bowen 7-11-9 L Cummins
4 2516 CHEATER 49 (B,F) H Johnson 6-11-4 C McCormack
5 0001 CLONGOUR 7 (B,F) F Murphy 7-10-13 D J Kavanagh
6 0340 KINGS LANE 14 (G) J Dun 8-10-10 E Husband
7 4034 CHILL FACTOR 58 Mrs M Reveley 7-10-10 G Lee
8 P022 SOLOMAN SPRINGS 39 (F) Mrs V Ward 7-10-6 P Henley
9 43-0 FIERY SUN 19 (C,F,G,S) R Barr 12-10-4 N Horrocks
10 2460 MOVIE MAN 75 J Turner 5-10-1 R Burns
11 0510 BARNSTORMER 14 (B,F,G) E Elliott 11-10-0 G F Ryan
12 2406 BLOOMING SPRING 59 (F) Mrs D Thomson 8-10-0 D Thomas
13 -040 STEPDAUGHTER 22 Mrs D Thomson 11-10-0 R McGrath
14 /P0 STRONG CHARACTER 37 (S) D Lamb 11-10-0 N Hannity (5)

7-2 Clongour, 9-2 Scarba, 5-1 Troodos, 6-1 Cheater 7-1 Chill Factor, 8-1 Soloman Springs, Frown, 10-1 others

3.55 McEWAN'S DURHAM NATIONAL (Handicap chase: £7,133: 3m 4f) (10)

1 1104 ACT THE WAG 14 (B,F,G) M Todhunter 8-11-11 P Carberry
2 003P DONT TELL THE WIFE 35 (BF,G,S) C Egerton 11-11-2 J A McCarthy
3 P4P4 URANUS COLLONGES 25 (B,D,G,S) J Fitzgerald 11-10-8 W Dwan
4 F2F3 WESTWELL BOY 28 (F,G) P Beaumont 11-10-8 R Supple
5 F131 LUCKY DOLLAR 18 (F,S) K Bailey 9-10-7 A Thornton
6 0-60 OVER THE STREAM 26 (D,F,G) Miss M Milligan 11-10-4 A S Smith
7 4131 ROYAL SAXON 7 (F,G,S) P Bowen 11-10-0 W Marston
8 0/0 JAUNTY GIG 14 (B,C,F,G) J Birkett 11-10-0 L O'Hara
9 4003 TRIONA'S HOPE 8 E Caine 8-10-0 Mr M H Naughton (5)
10 4643 UPWELL 6 (C,F) R Johnson 13-10-0 K Johnson

3-1 Lucky Dollar, 7-2 Westwell Boy, 9-2 Dont Tell The Wife 6-1 Uranus Collonges, Act The Wag 6-1 Royal Saxon 10-1 others

4.25 KEITH THOMAS ASSOCIATES NOVICES CHASE (£3,345: 3m 3f) (11)

1 P43P ELLIOTT'S WISH 38 (G) H Johnson 6-11-9 Mr T J Barry (7)
2 3603 GERMAN LEGEND 5 (F) D Lamb 7-11-9 J Burke
3 443P DONOVANS REEF 19 (F,S) Mrs L Marshall 11-11-6 K Johnson
4 2PU2 LITTLE MARTINA 21 (BF,G,S) D Grissell 9-11-4 J R Kavanagh
5 P333 ALICAT 44 J Curtis 6-11-2 M Foster
6 64PF ANOTHER VENTURE 7 (BF,S) F Murphy 7-11-2 P Carberry
7 0-45 GONE AWAY 50 M Hammond 8-11-2 R Garritty
8 PPPF LYFORD CAY 43 J Bewley 7-11-2 S Melrose (7)
9 0P25 MASTER FLASHMAN 25 Mrs M Reveley 8-11-2 G Lee
10 50P5 MORE JOY 12 B Ellison 9-11-2 C McCormack (7)
11 F403 TACTIX 25 Miss M Milligan 7-10-11 A S Smith

6-4 Little Martina, 4-1 Another Venture, 6-1 Elliott's Wish, 7-1 German Legend, 8-1 Gone Away, 14-1 Tactix, 16-1 others

4.55 SEDGEFIELD STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,438: 2m 1f) (14)

1 013 LANDLER 26 (G) J Norton 4-11-1 E Callaghan (3)
2 2-00 CHIEF OF KHORASSAN 74 S Kettlewell 5-11-0 G Lee
3 24 GOING PRIMITIVE 19 J Hetherton 6-11-0 Mr S Swiers
4 HAPPY BLAKE Mrs J Storey 6-11-0 B Storey
5 NO TIME TO WAIT W Haigh 6-11-0 D Pears
6 OLD BOMBAY T Barron 5-11-0 A Thornton
7 0 PERCY'S JOY 36 T Easterby 5-11-0 L Wyer
8 0 FRUGAL 53 B Murray 4-10-8 W Dwan
9 GIKONGORO P Haslam 4-10-8 M Foster
10 00 JO LIGHTNING 57 B Ellison 4-10-8 K Johnson
11 JUST IMP J Turner 4-10-8 R Supple
12 4 POLAR KING 26 C Thornton 4-10-8 N Horrocks (7)
13 TOEJAM R Barr 4-10-8 N Smith
14 SWIFTLY SUPREME E Caine 4-10-3 Tristan Davidson (7)

5-2 Polar King, 4-1 Landler, 5-1 Going Primitive, 6-1 Chief Of Khorassan, 8-1 Old Bombay, 10-1 Percy's Joy, 12-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: P Bowen, 5 winners from 12 runners, 41.7%, F Murphy, 3 from 8, 37.5%, P Haslam, 3 from 10, 30.0%, Mrs M Reveley, 72 from 247, 29.1%, J Fitzgerald, 14 from 53, 26.4%

JOCKEYS: P Niven, 56 winners from 183 rides, 31.7%, S Melrose 3 from 10, 30.0%, G Lee, 10 from 44, 22.7%, L Wyer, 24 from 115 20.9%, J Callaghan, 17 from 110, 15.5%

ASCOT

THUNDERER
2.00 Serious
2.35 Storm Alert
3.10 Trainglot
3.40 Garnwin
4.20 Daraydan
5.00 **STRUGGLES GLORY** (nap)
5.35 Fasil
Carl Evans: 5.00 Struggles Glory.

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing. F if flat (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS

2.00 PEREGRINE HANDICAP HURDLE (£5,410: 2m 110yd) (9 runners) BBC1

1 3-31F20 DANCING PADDY 30 (CD,F,G,S) K Cunningham-Brown 9-12-0 R Dunwoody –
2 14-1103 CRACK ON 79 (D,BF,F,G,S) (D Peppiatt) P Hobbs 7-11-7 A P McCoy 91
3 521036 ALBEMINE 56 (B,D,F,G) (Mrs J Cecil) Mrs J Cecil 8-10-13 T Kent 97
4 D334U6 HOLY WANDERER 86 (D,BF,F,G) (Gain Partnership) T George 8-10-11 M A Fitzgerald 94
5 500036 ALLTIME DANCER 42 (B,D,F,G,S) (H Heyman) O Sherwood 5-10-7 J Osborne 98
6 1-01 SERIOUS 11 (D,F) (T and D Loscada) K Bailey 7-10-4 C O'Dwyer ⊞
7 4-20100 FAUSTINO 30 (CD,F) (The Billbrook '4') P Hobbs 5-10-1 N Williamson 95
8 453100 I'M A DREAMER 11 (D,F,G) (Miss M Rowland) Miss M Rowland 7-10-0 Mr R Thornton (3) 86
9 540106 NASHVILLE STAR 14 (V,D,F,G) (R Mathew) R Mathew 6-10-0 C Llewellyn 87

Long handicap: I'm A Dreamer 9-1, Nashville Star 8-13

BETTING: 9-4 Serious, 3-1 Crack On, 4-1 Albemine, 6-1 Faustino, 9-1 Alltime Dancer, Dancing Paddy, 12-1 Holy Wanderer, 33-1 others

1996: SUIVEZ 6-9-11 J Culloty (16-1) Mrs N Macauley 12 ran

FORM FOCUS

DANCING PADDY 3½l 2nd of 3 to Double Symphony in grade II game spirit chase at Newbury (2m 1f, good). CRACK ON beat Lightening Lad 2½l in 7-runner handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 110yd, good) Nov 96. SERIOUS beat Tejano Gold 2l in 6-runner handicap hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good to firm). FAUSTINO beat La Menorquina 5l in 3-runner handicap hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good to firm) Aug 96. I'M A DREAMER beat Silly Money neck in 10-runner conditional novice handicap hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good).
Selection: CRACK ON (nap)

2.35 KYLE STEWART HANDICAP CHASE (£8,122: 2m 3f 110yd) (5 runners) BBC1

1 4-11316 STORM ALERT 84 (C,F,G,S) (Mrs D Perrett) D Nicholson 11-12-0 R Johnson 94
2 5U1U53- AMTRAK EXPRESS 350 (F,G,S) (Amtrak Express) N Henderson 10-11-5 M A Fitzgerald 95
3 1411F4 SUPER TACTICS 10 (D,BF,F,G,S) (H Perry) R Alner 9-10-9 R Dunwoody 97
4 123443 BERTONE 8 (F,G) (Mrs H Dulley) K Bailey 8-10-4 C O'Dwyer ⊞
5 5P6-PP5 YOUNG ALFIE 18 (B,F,S) (J Panvert) J Panvert 12-10-0 C Llewellyn –

Long handicap: Young Alfie 6-2

BETTING: 6-4 Storm Alert, 9-4 Bertone, 7-2 Super Tactics, 9-2 Amtrak Express, 33-1 Young Alfie

1996: MORCELI 8-11-11 J Culloty (7-1) J Howard Johnson 15 ran

FORM FOCUS

STORM ALERT beat Ask Tom ½l in 5-runner handicap chase here (2m, good to firm) Dec 96. AMTRAK EXPRESS 4¾l 3rd of 17 to Lord Of A Lord in the grade II WHITBREAD at Sandown (3m 5f 110yd, good to firm) April 96. SUPER TACTICS beat Fine Harvest 1¾l in 7-runner handicap chase at Kempton (2m, good to firm). BERTONE 4¾l 3rd of 7 to Unguided Missile in handicap chase at Aintree (3m 1f, good). YOUNG ALFIE distance 5th of 5 to Red Bean in handicap chase at Sandown (2m, good to firm)
Selection: BERTONE

3.10 LETHEBY & CHRISTOPHER LONG DISTANCE HURDLE (Grade II: £18,750: 3m) (5 runners) BBC1

1 11-1320 TRAINGLOT 30 (F,G,S) (Marquesa de Moratalla) J Fitzgerald 10-11-10 R Dunwoody ⊞
2 131320 OLYMPIAN 32 (B,CD,F,G) (J Neville) J Neville 10-11-3 M A Fitzgerald 82
3 430131 SASSIVER 12 (F,G) (P Kelleway) P Kelleway 7-11-3 K Gaule 55
4 460123 OATIS ROSE 10 (G,S) (Mrs J Redvers) M Sheppard 7-10-12 Sophie Mitchell 84
5 303101 PLEASURELAND 14 (D,F,G) (Mrs S McGarvie) R Curtis 4-10-9 D Morris 71

BETTING: 4-6 Trainglot, 9-2 Olympian, 6-1 Pleasureland, 7-1 Oatis Rose, 12-1 Sassiver.

1996: PLEASURE SHARED 8-11-10 W Marston (6-1) P Hobbs 7 ran

FORM FOCUS

TRAINGLOT 4l 2nd of 6 to Ocean Hawk in grade I long walk hurdle here (3m 1f 110yd, good to firm) OLYMPIAN 1½l 2nd of 6 to Cokenny Boy in handicap hurdle at Kempton (3m 110yd, good to firm) SASSIVER beat Scud Missile 1l in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 5f 110yd, good to firm). OATIS ROSE beat Dantes Cavalier short-head in 8-runner handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 6f, good). PLEASURELAND beat Mayfin Magic 1¾l in 5-runner novice hurdle at Towcester (3m, good to firm).
Selection: TRAINGLOT

3.40 KESTREL NOVICES CHASE (£5,654: 2m 3f 110yd) (4 runners)

1 831111 GARNWIN 17 (CD,F,G) (Pioneer Heat-Treatment) N Henderson 7-11-12 M A Fitzgerald 95
2 F11133 GREENBACK 17 (D,F,G,S) (J Joseph) P Hobbs 6-11-12 N Williamson 96
3 351231 JUST BRUCE 18 (F) (A Heath) Mrs E Heath 8-11-12 D Gallagher ⊞
4 0/22122 FRAZER ISLAND 17 (S) (Dr B Alexander) R Rowe 8-11-9 D O'Sullivan 94

BETTING: 5-4 Garnwin, 5-2 Greenback, 4-1 Frazer Island, 9-2 Just Bruce

1996: SENOR EL BETRUTTI 7-11-12 G Bradley (2-1) Mrs S Nock 4 ran

FORM FOCUS

GARNWIN beat FRAZER ISLAND (1lb better off) ½l in 5-runner novice handicap chase over course and distance (good) with GREENBACK (14lb better off) 26l 3rd. GREENBACK beat Mister Drum 1¾l in 4-runner novice chase at Kempton (2m 4f 110yd, good to firm) Dec 96. JUST BRUCE beat Mister Drum 1¾l in 3-runner novice chase at Sandown (2m, good to firm). FRAZER ISLAND beat Mandys Mantino 2l in 7-runner novice chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft)
Selection: FRAZER ISLAND

4.20 PARTNERSHIP PARADE NOVICES HURDLE (£3,729: 2m 4f) (8 runners)

1 613032 DARAYDAN 12 (G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 5-11-10 A P McCoy ⊞
2 05P0P0 BOOZYS DREAM 12 (G Legg) N Thomson 6-11-2 Mr E Babington (7) –
3 5 HIGH SUMMER 22 (D Wilson) T Thomson Jones 7-11-2 J Culloty –
4 F1-00 MISTER GOODGUY 44 (F,S) (M O'Brien) R Curtis 8-11-2 D Morris –
5 OVER THE WAY (Mrs E Baines) N Henderson 7-11-2 M A Fitzgerald –
6 0U64 PEALINGS 12 (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 5-11-2 R Johnson 53
7 0 PEERS FOLLY 21 (Lord Donoughue) Miss H Knight 7-11-2 J F Titley –
8 2-4552 WENTWORTH 29 (Miss J Newell) G Thorner 5-11-2 B Powell 60

BETTING: 1-3 Daraydan, 7-1 Over The Way, 10-1 High Summer, Wentworth, 12-1 Peers Folly, 14-1 others

1996: MANDYS MANTINO 6-11-10 P Hide (9-4 fav) J Gifford 14 ran

FORM FOCUS

DARAYDAN 3½l 2nd of 5 to Potentate in Chepstow hurdle (2m, good) BOOZYS DREAM 43l 8th of 9 to Mrs Em in Wincanton novice hurdle (3m, firm) HIGH SUMMER 25l 5th of 19 to Oum Eagle in Newbury maiden hurdle (2m 5f, good). MISTER GOODGUY tailed off behind Tomo in 17-runner Ludlow novice hurdle (2m 5f, good). PEALINGS 26l 6th of 16 to Quality in Newbury novice hurdle (2m 110yd, good) with PEERS FOLLY 8l 8th. WENTWORTH 6l 2nd of 8 to Muhandam in Fakenham maiden hurdle (2m, good)
Selection: DARAYDAN

5.00 MERLIN NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE (Amateurs £2,879. 3m 110yd) (14 runners)

1 12F-1U CAPO CASTANUM 31 (D,F) (D Gyle-Thompson) Miss H Knight 8-13-0 A Wintle (7) 97
2 4F431 NORTHERN VILLAGE 14 (F,G) (L Dace) L Dace 10-12-7 D Alers-Hankey (7) 96
3 6-431 POORS WOOD 17 (C,G,S) (F Jackson) S Brean 10-12-7 T McCarthy (5) 91
4 PPU1F TOM'S GEMINI STAR 9 (F) (O Carter) O Carter 9-12-7 E James (7) ⊞
5 -PP21 AMADEUS 12P (F) (R Barr) R Barr 9-12-0 M Gingell (7) 74
6 3-131 APATURA KING 28P (F,G) (C Gibbs) Mrs S Alner 7-12-0 T Mitchell (5) –
7 0001- BALASANI 371 (F,G,S) (J J O'Neill) J J O'Neill 11-12-0 A Sansome (5) –
8 22-32 BERRINGS DASHER 21P (F) (J Aylon) Mrs J Richardson 10-12-0 M Watson (7) 87
9 0P611 BILBO BAGGINS 12P (F) (Mrs P Tetley) Mrs P Tetley 9-12-0 M Gorman (7) –
10 1P-12 ELMORE 39 (BF,G) (M Roberts) M Roberts 10-12-0 P Hacking (3) 76
11 F1F-P LOYAL GAIT 21 (F) (A Darlington) A Darlington 9-12-0 J Trice-Rolph (5) –
12 2635 LURRIGA GLITTER 9 (B) (M Wareing) R Smith 9-12-0 R Walley (7) 88
13 111 STRUGGLES GLORY 27P (F,G) (D Robinson) D Robinson 6-12-0 D C Robinson (7) –
14 35P-1 MAKING TIME 41P (F,G) (R Shepherd) M Loggin 10-11-9 Andrew Martin (7) 85

BETTING. 7-2 Struggles Glory 9-2 Capo Castanum 5-1 Northern Village, 6-1 Balasani 7-1 Poors Wood 8-1 Elmore, 10-1 Apatura King, 12-1 Bilbo Baggins 16-1 others

1996. LITTLE MARTINA 8-11-6 J Culloty (11-4 fav) Mrs D Grissell 11 ran

FORM FOCUS

CAPO CASTANUM beat Jupiter Moon 8l in 11-runner hunter chase at Windsor (3m good to firm) POORS WOOD beat Quiet Confidence 2½l in 9-runner hunter chase here (2m 3f 110yd good) TOM'S GEMINI STAR beat Vital Song 5l in 9-runner novice hunter chase at Wincanton (2m 5f good to firm) with NORTHERN VILLAGE 10l 3rd. AMADEUS beat Bachelor-Carrasco 20l in 6-runner point to point at Marks Tey (3m, firm). APATURA KING beat Medlane 2l in 6-runner mixed open at Larkhill (3m good to firm). BALASANI beat Castle Secret 1½l in 6-runner claiming hurdle at Newton Abbot (3m 3f, good to soft)
Selection: POORS WOOD

5.35 ROYAL ASCOT CRICKET CLUB NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£5,402 2m 110yd) (7 runners)

1 0-05210 JOHN DRUMM 8 (D,G,S) (A Jenkins) P Webber 6-11-10 J Osborne 90
2 031 FASIL 33 (G) (T Usher) N Walker 4-11-6 A P McCoy 98
3 42-126 REGAL PURSUIT 36 (F) (L Tracey) N Henderson 6-11-2 M A Fitzgerald 92
4 410622 FAIRLY SHARP 22 (D,BF,F) (Mr C Bready) G Roe 4-10-10 N Williamson ⊞
5 4634 SUPER RAPIER 40 (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 5-10-0 R Johnson 98
6 36F555 ADILOV 14 (T Mitchell) J Bridger 5-10-0 Sophie Mitchell (3) 95
7 F063 MAETERLINCK 21 (G Thorner) G Thorner 5-10-0 Claire Thorner (7) 98

Long handicap: Adilov 9-13 Maeterlinck 9-5

BETTING. 3-1 John Drumm, 7-2 Fasil, 4-1 Fairly Sharp, 5-1 Regal Pursuit 6-1 Super Rapier, 8-1 Maeterlinck 10-1 Adilov

1996: INTERMAGIC 6-10-8 S Fox (4-1) J Fox 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

JOHN DRUMM beat Classy Lad 4l in 13-runner novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good) with MAETERLINCK (24lb better off) 14l 3rd. FASIL beat Kinnescash 2½l in 14-runner maiden hurdle at Taunton (2m 3f 110yd, good).
REGAL PURSUIT 4l 2nd of 6 to Royal Raven in conditional novice hurdle here (2m 4f, good) with ADILOV (17lb better off) short-head 3rd. FAIRLY SHARP ¾l 2nd of 17 to Belmarita in novice hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, good) on penultimate start.
SUPER RAPIER 10½l 4th of 9 to Lord Rooble in novice hurdle at Windsor (2m 4f, good).
Selection: FASIL

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rns	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
D Nicholson	18	68	26.5	J Culloty	4	9	44.4
Miss H Knight	5	19	26.3	R Johnson	6	21	28.6
G Hubbard	4	19	21.1	K Gaule	3	12	25.0
M Pipe	15	74	20.3	J Osborne	28	115	24.3
R Alner	5	27	18.5	A P McCoy	16	67	23.9

BLINKERED FIRST TIME. Ascot: 2.00 Albemine 5.00 Lurriga Glitter Newton Abbot: 2.45 Cravato 5.15 Phone The Pipeline Sedgefield: 1.45 Point Duty. 3.55 Act The Wag. Warwick: 3.30 Double Gold 4.35 Captain Sinbad Wolverhampton: 7.00 Mountaineer 9.30 Napier Star

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Musselburgh (first race, 2.20), Hexham (2.10), Southwell (2.00)
TUESDAY: Newmarket (C4, 2.05), Cheltenham (C4, 2.20), Exeter (2.10)
WEDNESDAY: Newmarket (C4, 2.05), Pontefract (2.45), Cheltenham (2.30)
THURSDAY: Newmarket (C4, 2.00), Ripon (2.10), Ayr (2.20).
FRIDAY: Newbury (BBC, 2.10), Thirsk (2.20), Ayr (2.00)
SATURDAY: Newbury (BBC, 2.00), Thirsk (2.20), Ayr (C4, 1.55), Bangor (2.10), Stratford (2.35)

Flat meetings in bold

كمال الجنزوري

3OT

ATHLETICS: FAST TIMES LIKELY TO EMERGE FROM RECORD LONDON MARATHON FIELD

Britons can enjoy vintage year

By David Powell, Athletics Correspondent

IF THERE is a *sniff of* poacher-turned-gamekeeper in the air on Blackheath for the Flora London Marathon tomorrow, Linford Christie having accepted the role of official starter, it will be nothing to the smell of massage oil and linament. More preventative rub for aches and pains than ever will be needed as a record field of 28,000 prepares to set off. But, never mind the width, feel the quality.

Weather and other uncontrollable influences permitting, this could be the best London Marathon this decade. It may even compare with the two that stand out in the 16-year history of the event. Those were in 1985, when the British men scored a 1-2-3 and Ingrid Kristiansen set a women's world record, and in 1989, when six men broke 2hr 10min and Veronique Marot won the women's race with a British record.

FLORA
LONDON MARATHON
1997

Only in The Times next week: the complete list of London Marathon finishers

Marot's mark of 2hr 25min 56sec still stands, but Liz McColgan, who last year became the first British woman since Marot to win, will not attack the time, even though there is a bonus incentive for her to do so. McColgan recognises that the field is too strong for her to be sidetracked from her main task of winning, though, given the strength of the opposition, she may need the record to triumph.

McColgan is fit for her defence but there is a real possibility that she could run faster than last year and not win. This is likely to be the first time that five women break 2½ hours on the course. Manuela Machado, the European and world champion, and Anuta Catuna, the New York City Marathon champion, are among the challengers for McColgan's title.

"It is important to think only about winning," McColgan said. "With a field of this calibre, there is a chance to run fast anyway. I am running strong."

It seems a missed marketing opportunity that McColgan has had no offers of sponsorship from the insect repellent industry. She was similarly confident before the Olympic Games in Atlanta last summer, but fell ill after being bitten by an insect and finished sixteenth. The nearest thing she has suffered to an insect bite this week has been from *The Mirror*, which yesterday offered secrets from her private life.

While McColgan, Machado and Catuna are the favourites, with Ren Xiujuan, from China, Lidia Simon, from Romania, and Joyce Chepchumba, from Kenya, only marginally less fancied, the best two longshot bets would be Esther Kiplagat, from Kenya, and Sonja Krolik, from Germany. If Marian Sutton, Britain's other leading contender, is to make an impression it will be in the same way as she won the Chicago Marathon last October.

Sutton indicated yesterday that she would not follow the pacemaker, who has been asked to reach halfway in 72min 30sec. She is aiming to break 2hr 30min for the first time and said: "I have to be sensible with a pace I know I can handle."

Antonio Pinto, from Portugal, will start as favourite for the men's race, with Paul Evans and Richard Nerurkar, from Britain, his strongest challengers. Josiah Thugwane, the Olympic champion from South Africa, is another contender, as is Steve Moneghetti, from Australia. Armando Quintanilla, from Mexico, looks the best outsider.

Evans has had no interruptions to his training since Chicago. "Winning Chicago finally made me realise that, over the marathon, on my day, I am as good as anyone in the world," Evans said. "This time I have planned how to win London. I have never done that before.

"The pacemaker is going to go through the half in sub-64, which is what I want. I honestly think that this could be the greatest London ever and somebody is going to have to run very fast to win it."

ASHLEY COOMBES

McColgan, below, and Sutton head the British challenge in the women's race tomorrow

Staying focused in adversity

IF YOU notice a runner towards the front of the Flora London Marathon far removed from the blue line that marks the shortest route, the chances are that it will be Noel Thatcher (David Powell writes). Although he cannot see more than five yards ahead, and then only shapes and colours, Thatcher is a contender to finish among the leading 100. He runs without a guide, keeping well away from others to avoid collisions.

Thatcher, 31, from Harlow, is a category B2 blind runner and was appointed MBE this year after winning the 5,000 and 10,000 metres at the 1996 Atlanta Paralympics.

Despite difficulties at water stations, and regardless of the poor vision that precludes him from shielding from the wind among a group, Thatcher, a physiotherapist, has a best time of 2hr 35min 57sec and is confident of breaking 2min 30sec.

If successful, that should put him among the fastest 100 of the 28,000 expected starters and about on a par with Liz McColgan, but his prospects will be dimmer the brighter the day. "I am very photosensitive, so it is very painful to run in glare," he said. "In a marathon, you need to eradicate any source of minor stress." He would wear special sunglasses but lost them at Disneyland.

He loses time at the drinks stations — "I usually end up knocking over about six bottles before I get one" — and by not following the blue line. Come the finish, he will have run closer to 27 miles than 26.

Labour tipped to make marathon running

SIMON BARNES

On Saturday

THE Flora London Marathon is a marginal constituency. It really could go either way, for there are three would-be MPs taking part, there being nothing much else going on to distract them at this time of year. These are Alun Michael (Labour, Cardiff South and Penarth, personal best 4hr 9min), Gary Waller (Conservative, Keighley, 4hr 8min) and, the narrow favourite for this race within a race, John Austin-Walker (Labour, Woolwich, 3hr 56min). Waller, like his party, may not look like the swiftest right now, but can at least claim to have done it before. He has run in 12 London Marathons, including the first in 1981, completing 11.

The race will also include 74 clergy (including three women), 94 dentists (including seven women), 37 editors (including five women), 951 from the military (including 32 women) and 375 housewives (including 364 women). This column would have run, but unfortunately it has a subsequent engagement.

Score draw

Siddalls Academicals football team, of Bicester, were 3-0 up with 15 minutes to play against their sworn enemies, Nightingale Dream Team, of Langford. It was then that Brian Govorusa, the Siddalls manager, played his trump. Onto the pitch came Debbie. She was wearing high heels and — er — that's it.

Govorusa said: "I hired the strippagram to put them off." Nice idea, but alas it was Siddalls themselves, a team of builders, who were mesmerised by Debbie's charms. The Nightingale Dream Team pulled back three goals and the match finished a draw. John Kerrison, manager of the Nightingale Dream Team, said: "My boys had seen it all before and kept playing. All the builders stopped and kept looking."

Lots and lots

The statue of Fred Perry, which stands hard by the entrance to the press-room at Wimbledon, presumably to encourage in us all a sense of perspective, is no more than about 3ft in height, but it still dwarfs every Brit who has picked up a tennis racket since his time. Now his trophies and medals are to come up for auction at Christie's on June 20 and are expected to fetch about £150,000, for a lifetime's work. Fact: last year, Richard Krajicek, the winner of the gentlemen's singles at Wimbledon, received £392,500.

Splitting hairs

Important rule-change from the International Judo Federation: "The tying of long hair during a contest will be allowed twice and any further stoppage of time will be a penalty of shido" — a three-point penalty.

Presumably this applies to both sexes. In fact, some (female) fighters have been known to favour a slack hair-tie, constant adjustment of which gives them much-needed breathers. But has the way been opened for the strategic unravelling of the pony-tail?

You'll have to wait. He's having a bad hair day!

Press-ganged

Yes, I know you wish they could do it here. The Prime Minister of Egypt, Dr Kamal al-Ganzouri, apparently traumatised by Egypt's dismal showing in a World Cup qualifier, has told newspaper editors to banish the very names of the shamed football stars from their pages. Egypt lost 1-0 to war-ravaged Liberia, which is the team bankrolled, as reported in this space last week, by the great George Weah (who, of course, scored the goal).

After this, the Egyptian Prime Minister summoned the country's editors and requested the press blackout. "As a former footballer myself, I can say that our footballers made no effort," he said. "There is a difference between being beaten after a real effort and making no effort at all. The newspapers published the story on the front pages while stories about political meetings and the Council of Ministers were put on inside pages. They get everything they want from the state without fulfilling the trust placed in them." He demanded a footballing boycott of 50 days. One newspaper, *Al Ahrar*, gave in to his demands; the rest continued to pour scorn on the hapless players.

Famous five

Congratulations to the five readers of the year, aka the winners of this column's *Wisden* competition, the annual attempt to plumb the murky mind of the editor, Matthew Engel, and to predict his five cricketers of the year. He hinted at the playing of a wild card and this column speculated wildly at Sanath Jayasuriya, of Sri Lanka.

The winners were, in fact, Jayasuriya, (only one entrant followed my astonishingly brilliant and perceptive guess), Mushtaq Ahmed, Saeed Anwar, Phil Simmons and Sachin Tendulkar: fine cricketers and not an Englishman among them. A copy of the 1997 *Wisden* goes to M. J. Liszka, John Baker, Mike Jackson, David Williams and Jon Edgson as a reward for their percipience. But *still* no one has got all five.

NEWTON ABBOT

THUNDERER

2.10 Mellow Master. 2.45 The Whole Hog. 3.15 Burlington Sam. 3.45 Polden Pride. 4.15 Hay Dance. 4.45 Mistress Rosie. 5.15 *Filscot.*

GOING: FIRM (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

2.10 HAPPY BIRTHDAY PARTYFARE JUVENILE HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,169: 2m 1f) (6 runners)

1	011	MELLOW MASTER 12 (CD,F,S) N Walker 11-10	X Aizpuru (7)
2	0P3	SAFECRACKER 12 C Morlock 10-4	D Byrne
3	3402	BATH KNIGHT 14 R Curtis 10-4	Mr J Goldstein (7)
4	000	SAUCY DANCER 38 J Tuck 10-0	S McNeill
5	0902	KAI'S LADY 9 C Popham 10-0	T Dascombe
6	0P60	RAPID LINER 7 R Baker 10-0	V Slattery

1-2 Mellow Master, 5-1 Bath Knight, 7-1 Safecracker, 10-1 Kai's Lady, 16-1 others

2.45 ADDISONS QUALITY MEATS NOVICES CHASE (£2,846: 3m 2f 110yd) (4)

1	U212	THE WHOLE HOG 11 (D,F) K Bailey 8-11-3	S McNeill
2	F4UU	DUNLIR 14 (F) P Rodford 7-10-10	M Sharratt
3	-P43	*RUSTIC FLIGHT 12 L Waring 10-10-10*	*M Griffiths (7)*
4	520P	CRAVATE 12 (B) P Hobbs 7-10-5	G Tormey

1-3 The Whole Hog, 6-1 Cravate, 8-1 Rustic Flight, 12-1 Dunlir

3.15 SQUIRES RECRUITMENT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,211: 2m 6f) (4)

1	1123	BURLINGTON SAM 12 (F,G) A Hobbs 9-11-10	O Burrows
2	0324	MISS MARIGOLD 3 (B,F,G,S) R Hodges 8-11-9	DOUBTFUL
3	41P3	DISSOLVE 7 (F,G) N Lampard 5-10-12	Chris Webb
4	-PPU	ALLAHRAKHA 14 (G) M Hill 6-10-5	T Dascombe

4-5 Burlington Sam, 11-10 Dissolve, 10-1 Allahrakha.

3.45 PAIGNTON AND DARTMOUTH STEAM RAILWAY HANDICAP CHASE (£3,534: 2m 5f 110yd) (5)

1	1/01	DOUALAGO 9 (B,D,F,G,S) M Pipe 7-12-0	G Supple (5)
2	-222	POLDEN PRIDE 10 (CD,BF,F) G Balding 9-11-5	B Clifford
3	3P03	*BEAU BABILLARD 43 (B,D,G,S) P Nicholls 10-11-2*	B Fenton
4	U313	FENWICK 3 (F,G,S) R Hodges 10-10-0	T Dascombe
5	302P	RYTON RUN 12 (F,G) Mrs S Odell 12-10-0	T J O'Sullivan

6-4 Doualago, 2-7 *Polden Pride*, 4-1 Beau Babillard, 5-1 Fenwick, 14-1 Ryton Run.

4.15 WILLIAM HILL HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,736: 2m 1f) (5)

1	1101	OUT RANKING 12 (D,F,G,S) J Neville 5-11-11	X Aizpuru (7)
2	1153	HAY DANCE 65 (D,BF,F,G,S) P Hobbs 6-11-3	G Tormey
3	/51	KNIGHT IN SIDE 38 (D,F,S) M Pipe 11-10-4	C Maude
4	33F4	*VERDE LUNA 14 (CD,F)* D Arbuthnot 5-10-0	S McNeill
5	3563	GLOWING PATH 14 (CD,F,S) R Hodges 7-10-0	J Harris (7)

6-4 Out Ranking, 2-1 Hay Dance, 4-1 Knight In Side, 7-1 Verde Luna, 10-1 Glowing Path

4.45 WILF TOWNSEND MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (£2,641: 2m 110yd) (9)

1	P525	MONDAY CLUB 19 (CD,F,G,S) J Tuck 13-11-10	R Bellamy
2	-4F3	SPINNING STEEL 110 (D,F,G) P Rodford 10-11-9	S Burrough
3	3600	TOOMUCH TOOSOON 189 (CD,F,G) P Nicholls 9-11-5	B Fenton
4	3144	SUPER SHARP 18 (CD,BF,F,G) H Oliver 9-11-3	Jacqui Oliver
5	4P04	DAYS OF THUNDER 14 (D,F,G) Mrs S Odell 9-10-13	T J O'Sullivan
6	2-SU	EVENING RAIN 12 (C,D,F,G,S) R Hodges 11-10-11	T Dascombe
7	4163	DAWN CHANCE 12 (D,BF,F,G,S) R Hodges 11-10-8	P Holley
8	UP-1	JAY JAY'S VOYAGE 14 (C,F) Mrs J Scrivens 14-10-7	Guy Lewis (3)
9	4PP1	MISTRESS ROSIE 12 (CD,F,S) M Hill 10-10-3	S Fox

11-4 Spinning Steel, 9-2 *Toomuch Toosoon*, 5-1 Monday Club, Super Sharp, 6-1 Dawn Chance, 8-1 Mistress Rosie, 10-1 Jay Jay's Voyage, 16-1 others.

5.15 SAPPHIRE AND DIAMONDS INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,278: 2m 1f) (5)

1	FFU	BROTHER NERO 14P A Hobbs 5-11-4	R Greene
2	04	COUNTRY KRIS 14 B Ryall 5-11-4	G Upton
3	26	*FILSCOT 44 W G M Turner 5-11-4*	J Power (7)
4	0	SEE PROSPERITY 23 Miss S Waterman 5-11-4	N Willmington (7)
5	00	PHONE THE PIPELINE 14 (B) M Pipe 4-10-12	B Moore (7)

5-4 Filscot, 5-2 Country Kris, 7-2 *Phone The Pipeline*, 8-1 See Prosperity, 25-1 Brother Nero.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

NEWTON ABBOT: Trainers: *J Tuck*, 3 winners from 9 runners, 33.3%; N Walker, 3 from 10, 30.0%; P Hobbs, 47 from 164, 28.7%; M Pipe, 100 from 384, 26.0%; P Nicholls, 34 from 135, 25.2%. Jockeys: Christopher Webb, 4 winners from 12 rides, 33.3%; G Tormey, 5 from 25, 20.0%; G Supple, 3 from 16, 18.8%; B Clifford, 6 from 39, 15.4%.

WOLVERHAMPTON: Trainers: A Stewart, 3 winners from 4 runners, 75.0%; R Charlton, 9 from 24, 37.5%; *D Loder*, 7 from 19, 36.8%; G Wragg, 4 from 11, 36.4%; M Bell, 11 from 49, 22.4%. Jockeys: K Darley, 25 winners from 103 rides, 24.3%; K Sked, 3 from 14, 21.4%; J Weaver, 56 from 272, 20.6%.

WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER

7.00 Brand New Dance. 7.30 Chilling. 8.00 Kalamata. 8.30 New Century. 9.00 Leg Beforum. *9.30 Waypoint.*

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

7.00 TRESCOTT MAIDEN STAKES (3-Y-O: £3,646: 1m 4f) (7 runners)

1	5-	BRAND NEW DANCE 154 D Arbuthnot 9-0	T Quinn 6
2	04	MASRRAH 16 R Armstrong 9-0	R Price 2
3	0	MEN OF WICKENBY 10 R McKellar 9-0	N Varley 1
4	30-0	MOORBIRD 11 J L Harris 9-0	D Holland 3
5	52	MOUNTAINEER 16 (B) M Bell 9-0	M Fenton 5
6		NEVILLE THE DEVIL N Littmoden 9-0	Dale Gibson 7
7		POLYPHONY R Charlton 9-0	S Sanders 4

5-4 Polyphony, 7-4 Mountaineer, 8-1 Brand New Dance, 12-1 Neville The Devil, 14-1 Masrrah, 16-1 Moorbird, 20-1 Men Of Wickenby.

7.30 PERTON CLAIMING STAKES (£2,070: 5f) (8)

1	1/0	GENERAL SIR PETER 12 (D,F,S) N Callaghan 5-9-6	S Drowne 1
2	00-5	PERFECT BRAVE 14 (F) J Balding 6-9-2	R Lappin 3
3	0304	THICK AS THIEVES 38 (D,F,G) R Thompson 5-9-2	J Bramhill (5) 4
4	0-52	HANNAH'S USHER 14 (CD,F,G) C Murray 5-9-0	J Weaver 6
5	5504	PENNYHOLME 14 (B,CD,G) J Hetherton 6-8-12	N Adams 5
6	4362	BON GUEST 5 I Naughton 3-8-9	F Ffrench (7) 8
7		LITTLE PAPOOSE B McMahon 4-8-9	T Quinn 7
8	1540	CHILLING 18 (CD,G) N Tinkler 3-8-0	K Sked (7) 2

2-1 Hannah's Usher, 5-2 Bon Guest, 4-1 Chilling, 8-1 Perfect Brave, 9-1 others

8.00 HAPPY BIRTHDAY JULIE HANDICAP (£2,070: 2m 46yd) (13)

1	505-	CUBAN NIGHTS 58J (C,G) B Llewellyn 5-10-0	J Bramhill (5) 2
2	50-5	BELLARA 14 (F,G,S) N Babbage 5-9-11	Dane O'Neill 12
3	5203	SHAKIYR 11 (B,CD,BF,G) R Hollinshead 6-9-11	F Lynch (3) 6
4	/20	ROYAL CITIZEN 18 (C,G) J Bottomley 8-9-9	L Charnock 11
5	0516	STATE APPROVAL 2 (C,F,G) P Eccles 4-9-8	C Rutter 8
6	6123	COLERIDGE 39 (B,C,D,F,G,S) J Sheehan 9-9-5	A Clark 13
7	1501	*KALAMATA 11 (C,D,G) J Glover 5-9-1*	*G Carter 3*
8	222-	CASTLE SECRET 12J (D,F,S) D Burchell 11-8-13	K Sked (7) 1
9	00/	SUBTLE TOUCH 706 T Clement 6-8-12	G Faulkner (5) 10
10	003-	SALLY'S TWINS 31J J Moore 4-8-11	J F Egan 9
11	4-23	LA MENORQUINA 12J (D,BF,G) D Marks 7-8-7	J Fortune 4
12	210-	TIAPHENA 299 (D,G) J Mackie 6-8-6	J Quinn 5
13	0/	BRIDIE'S PRIDE 31J G Ham 6-8-3	S Drowne 7

3-1 Kalamata, 7-2 La Menorquina, 6-1 State Approval, 7-1 Coleridge, 10-1 Bellara, Castle Secret, 12-1 Shakiyr, 16-1 others

8.30 PENNY JOYCE 21ST BIRTHDAY HANDICAP (£5,400: 1m 100yd) (11)

1	15/	ZUHAIR 640 (F) D McCain 4-10-0	V Slattery 2
2	-120	*NEW CENTURY 21 (C,D,F,G) D Nicholls 5-9-13*	Alex Greaves 5
3	220-	HAL'S PAL 183 (C,G) D Loder 4-9-12	K Darley 7
4	105-	VAN GURP 183 (D,G) B McMahon 4-9-4	T Quinn 3
5	1-10	TATIKA 17 (D,F,G) G Wragg 7-9-1	G Milligan (5) 6
6	24-1	EFFECTUAL 46 (G) Miss G Kelleway 4-8-10	D Holland 11
7	1600	DUKE VALENTINO 22 (CD,G) R Hollinshead 5-8-9	D Griffiths (3) 10
8	20-0	PENGAMON 50 (D,F,G) H Collingridge 5-8-8	J Quinn 1
9	606-	POLAR ECLIPSE 170 (S) M Johnston 4-8-6	J Weaver 9
10	53-0	CLASSIC LEADER 14 I Campbell 4-8-3	R Price 4
11	020-	DUELLO 161 (D,F,S) M Blanshard 6-8-1	M Roberts 8

5-2 Effectual, 3-1 Hal's Pal, 4-1 New Century, 7-1 Tatika, 10-1 Polar Eclipse, 12-1 Pengamon, 16-1 others

9.00 EDGSON SELLING STAKES (3-Y-O: £2,070: 1m 1f 79yd) (8)

1	04-5	BATTLE GROUND 9 N Callaghan 8-11	S Drowne 6
2	2436	LEG BEFORUM 17 L Montague Hall 8-11	Dane O'Neill 1
3	1350	MIRROR FOUR SPORT 4 (G) *M Johnston 8-11*	*J Weaver 8*
4	320-	OUR FUTURE 234 R Thompson 8-11	T Williams 5
5	6-04	SPONDULICKS 4 (V) B Baugh 8-11	R Price 4
6	5-36	*BABY JANE 19 (BF) R Guest 8-6*	A McGlone 3
7		OUR DROWSY MAGGIE W Brisbourne 8-6	Iona Wands (7) 7
8	40-0	SHERATON GIRL 14 N Littmoden 8-6	J Quinn 2

2-1 Baby Jane, 11-4 Sheraton Girl, 9-2 Spondulicks, 5-1 *Battle Ground*, 6-1 Leg Beforum, 8-1 Mirror Four Sport, 10-1 others

9.30 PORTOBELLO HANDICAP (£2,976: 6f) (12)

1	1033	*LITTLE IBNR 14 (CD,BF,F,G)* P Evans 6-9-12	J F Egan 5
2	05-1	WAYPOINT 19 (D,G) R Charlton 4-9-11	T Quinn 8
3	0200	LEIGH CROFTER 5 (B,C,D,F,G,S) P Cundell 8-9-10	D Holland 1
4	0250	NAPIER STAR 52 (B,C,D,G) Mrs N Macauley 4-9-8	C Teague (3) 3
5	040-	MR SPEAKER 231 (D,F) C Wall 4-9-8	N Carlisle 12
6	151-	BARRACK YARD 259 (G) A Stewart 4-9-7	S Whitworth 10
7	00-0	MERCURY 12 (G) J Glover 4-9-5	G Carter 4
8	2215	HOH MAJESTIC 11 (V,D,F,G) R Thompson 4-9-4	T Williams 7
9	023-	NINEACRES 155 (V,F,G) N Babbage 6-9-0	R Ffrench (7) 11
10	0-00	RYMER'S RASCAL 2 (D,S) E Alston 5-8-10	J Fortune 6
11	0205	DELROB 26 (B,CD,F,G) D Haydn Jones 6-8-6	Joelene Richards (7) 9
12	-100	ANOTHER NIGHTMARE 16 (CD,F,G,S) R McKellar 5-8-3	K Sked (7) 2

2-1 Waypoint, 9-2 Barrack Yard, 7-1 Leigh Crofter, 10-1 Nineacres, Hoh Majestic, *Mercury* 12-1 others.

Portman posts warning

Point-to-point
By Carl Evans

PREDICTING the weather used to involve guesswork, but not any more. It will be dry — at least until the cricket season starts and the first garden fetes hang out the bunting.

This is why the Jockey Club decided this week to allow meetings to be postponed if it seemed that few horses would be in action on the parched ground. Such a meeting, the **Portman** at Badbury Rings, comes into that category today but instead of calling off the fixture, reduced entry fees of £10 and £5 are being charged. Notices warning the public that runners will be scarce are to be placed at the entrance.

Badbury Rings has no watering facilities, other courses have been working overtime to moisten the ground, using bowsers, irrigation systems, slurry tankers and, in readiness for Wednesday's **Tiverton** meeting, an umbilical water carrier, a mile of tubing attached to a sprayer and a real lifeline for the fixture.

The ground must be reasonable for the Yorkshire trainer, Tim Walford, to risk his horses, which includes promising Ask Antony in the four-mile Grimthorpe Gold Cup at the **Middleton** tomorrow. Walford says it is and, since he is clerk of the course and responsible for watering, he should know. With Boulevard Bay in PPORA race, three in the members' and Noreasonatall in the maiden race, Walford is set for a busy day.

Julian Pritchard, the title leader, can win on Bagalino at the **Ludlow** meeting today and has excellent prospects on Lets Twist Again at the **Ledbury** tomorrow, both courses having been watered.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: Bicester with Whaddon Chase at Kingston Blount, 7m north of High Wycombe (first race 1.30). Braes of Derwent, Tranwell, 3m S of Morpeth (2.00). Cheshire, Alpraham, 3m SE of Tarporley (2.00). Glamorgan, St Hilary, 2m S of Cowbridge (2.00). Ludlow at Bitterley, 4m NE of Ludlow (2.00): Portman, Badbury Rings, 4m NW of Wimborne (2.00): Puckeridge, Horseheath, 4m W of Haverhill (2.00): Tetcott, Lifton, 4m E of Launceston (2.00). W Somerset Vale, Cothelstone, 2m NE of Bishops Lydeard (2.00)
TOMORROW: Dumfriesshire at Lockerbie, 2m SW of town (1.30): Hampshire, Hackwood Park, 2m SE of Basingstoke (2.00). Ledbury at Maisemore, 4m NW of Gloucester (2.00). Middleton at Whitwell, 6m SW of Malton (1.30): Pytchley, Guilsborough, 10m NW of Northampton (2.00). WEDNESDAY: Tiverton, Hockworthy, 6m NW of Tiverton (1.30)

THE SUNDAY TIMES
CHALLENGE
PLAY TOMORROW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN £10,000
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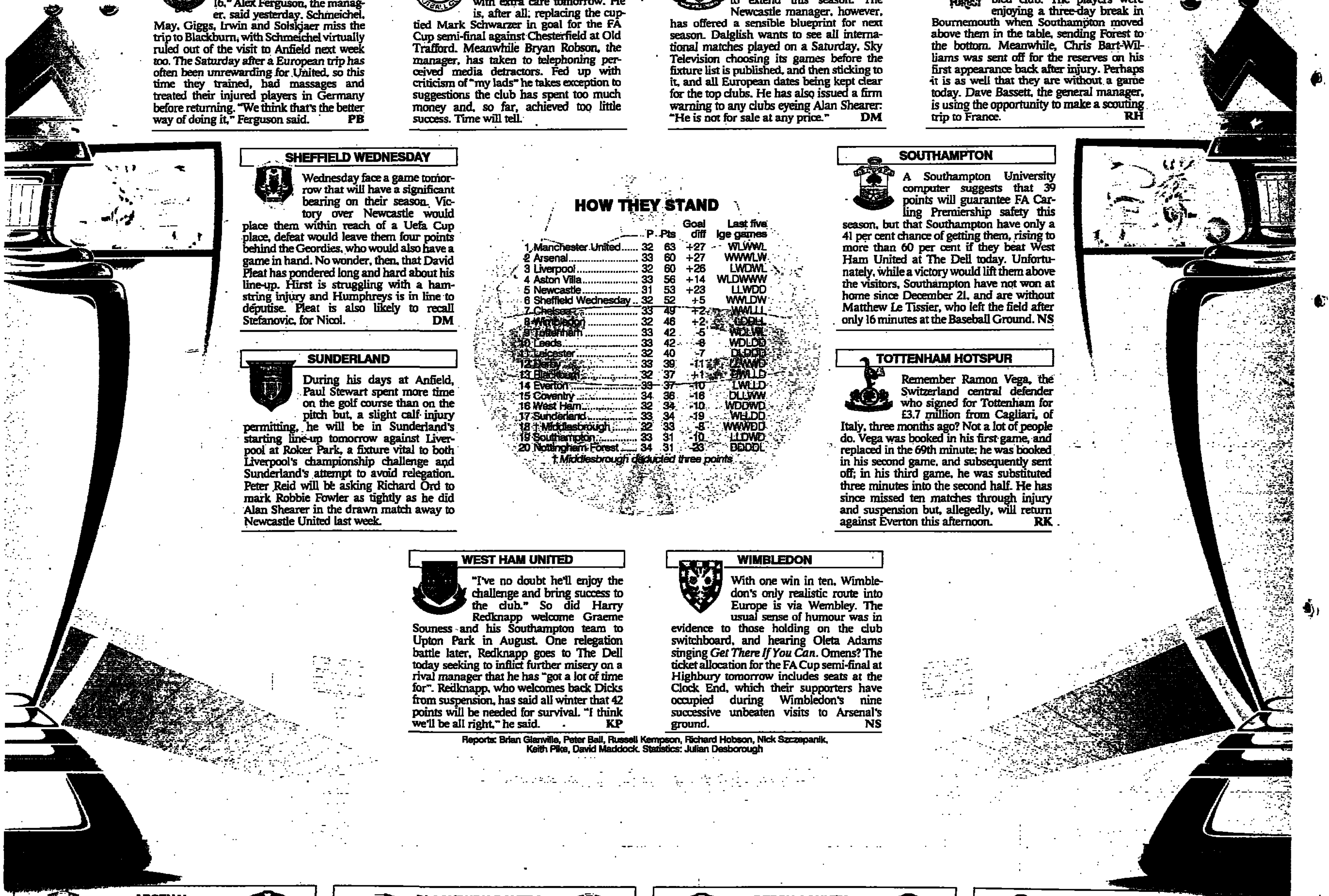
THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND



ARSENAL

Arsenal will not walk over Leicester City as they did over a pathetic Chelsea, not least because Leicester can bring in players cup-tied for the Coca-Cola final. Even without Adams and Merson, Arsenal surely have enough big guns to sink Leicester and maintain a challenge for the championship that has suddenly, even if by default, come alive again. Arsenal have no one as inventive as Garry Parker in midfield and Emile Heskey could trouble their defence. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

Villa rattle on towards a place in Europe, courtesy of six wins from their past nine matches, but spare a thought for Gary Charles, the right back. Charles has not played since breaking an ankle in the 1-1 draw against West Ham United a year ago and, after two operations, is only now taking his first tentative steps back to full health. "Gary is making progress," Brian Little, the Villa manager, said. "He's had his ups and downs along the way but it's at last beginning to look better." **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Alex Ferguson has finally found an ally in his quest to extend the season. Tony Parkes offered sympathy yesterday when considering the plight of Blackburn Rovers' opponents this afternoon: "Alex is right in the sense that people are jealous of Manchester United." But Parkes believes the Premiership cannot go back on its schedule. "If you extend the programme, then it should be for all teams, not just one or two," he said. Rovers have a full squad to choose from. **DM**

CHELSEA

Chelsea seem to be in deep crisis: their chief consolation being that Wimbledon, too, have gone off the boil. After the defeat at Coventry City on Wednesday, Steve Clarke, the defender, excoriated his team-mates. Chelsea's best semi-final hope may lie in their inconsistency. You never know how good or bad they will be. In Zola, Petrescu, Di Matteo and Mark Hughes they have players who rise to the great occasion, and Dennis Wise will be back to buzz about in midfield. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Hot on the heels of Barcelona's rumoured £20 million bid for Alan Shearer, Darren Huckerby, the England Under-21 and Coventry winger, was recently reported to be worth £34 million. Admittedly, the fee was based on projected transfer fees in 2000 but it still caused much amusement in the Highfield Road camp. "I've really enjoyed it since moving here," Huckerby, formerly of Newcastle United, said, "but all this story has done is get me a lot of stick from the other lads." **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

It has not taken long for the Baseball Ground regulars to take Paulo Wanchope to their hearts. Jim Smith, the manager, is a little more cautious, though. While the Costa Rica striker created Derby's goal against Southampton in midweek, he lost possession all too easily in the build-up to Southampton's equaliser. Indeed, for all the comparisons with Heskey, Asprilla and Duncan Ferguson, Wanchope, 20, has much to learn — about English life let alone its football. **RH**

EVERTON

Everton's search for the elusive victory that should ensure safety continues against Tottenham Hotspur today. "It's a massive game, we're expected to win it and rightly so," Dave Watson, the caretaker player-manager, said. At least he has Earl Barrett back, but the injury problems continue, with Short and Unsworth struggling and Parkinson possibly out for the rest of the season. At least Watson has one consolation if they do not win today: Liverpool are the next visitors to Goodison. **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

Leeds at least cannot complain that they are playing too much football. With the fixture away to Wimbledon postponed to next Wednesday because of the FA Cup, they have played only one match in three weeks. Instead "we've been working very hard on our passing and on keeping possession", George Graham reported, although he had the grace to add "but you wouldn't have thought so", after the 0-0 draw with Blackburn Rovers on Monday, Leeds's fifth at Elland Road this season. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

Steve Walsh transformed the Coca-Cola Cup final last week when he moved into the attack. However, a toe injury sustained against Everton in midweek leaves him doubtful for the replay against Middlesbrough on Wednesday. His absence can be absorbed against Arsenal this afternoon by the inclusion of Matt Elliott, who is cup-tied. Elliott has impressed since his club record £1.6 million transfer from Oxford United and is unlikely to suffer in comparisons with Keown today. **RH**

LIVERPOOL

Roy Evans does not merely have the headache of David James to trouble him. His whole defence has been shaky of late and it is within the back three that he must make some tough decisions before the game tomorrow at Roker Park. Matteo and Harkness will probably be replaced by Kvarme and Babb. "We have the option to make changes, but I have to be careful not to overreact," Evans said yesterday. One change he will have to make is for the suspended McAteer. Jones will fill in. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

"We went to Germany with 21 fit players and came back with 16," Alex Ferguson, the manager, said yesterday. Schmeichel, May, Giggs, Irwin and Solskjaer miss the trip to Blackburn, with Schmeichel virtually ruled out of the visit to Anfield next week too. The Saturday after a European trip has often been unrewarding for United, so this time they trained, had massages and treated their injured players in Germany before returning. "We think that's the better way of doing it," Ferguson said. **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

Ben Roberts will put on his long, hair-taming Alice band with extra care tomorrow. He is, after all, replacing the cup-tied Mark Schwarzer in goal for the FA Cup semi-final against Chesterfield at Old Trafford. Meanwhile Bryan Robson, the manager, has taken to telephoning perceived media detractors. Fed up with criticism of "my lads" he takes exception to suggestions the club has spent too much money and, so far, achieved too little success. Time will tell.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Kenny Dalglish has refused to join in the argument over plans to extend this season. The Newcastle manager, however, has offered a sensible blueprint for next season. Dalglish wants to see all international matches played on a Saturday, Sky Television choosing its games before the fixture list is published, and then sticking to it, and all European dates being kept clear for the top clubs. He has also issued a firm warning to any clubs eyeing Alan Shearer: "He is not for sale at any price." **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Another difficult week in a difficult season for this troubled club. The players were enjoying a three-day break in Bournemouth when Southampton moved above them in the table, sending Forest to the bottom. Meanwhile, Chris Bart-Williams was sent off for the reserves on his first appearance back after injury. Perhaps it is as well that they are without a game today. Dave Bassett, the general manager, is using the opportunity to make a scouting trip to France. **RH**

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Wednesday face a game tomorrow that will have a significant bearing on their season. Victory over Newcastle would place them within reach of a Uefa Cup place, defeat would leave them four points behind the Geordies, who would also have a game in hand. No wonder, then, that David Pleat has pondered long and hard about his line-up. Hirst is struggling with a hamstring injury and Humphreys is in line to deputise. Pleat is also likely to recall Stefanovic, for Nicol. **DM**

SUNDERLAND

During his days at Anfield, Paul Stewart spent more time on the golf course than on the pitch but, a slight calf injury permitting, he will be in Sunderland's starting line-up tomorrow against Liverpool at Roker Park, a fixture vital to both Liverpool's championship challenge and Sunderland's attempt to avoid relegation. Peter Reid will be asking Richard Ord to mark Robbie Fowler as tightly as he did Alan Shearer in the drawn match away to Newcastle United last week.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Manchester United	32	63	+27	WLWWL
2 Arsenal	33	60	+27	WWWLW
3 Liverpool	32	60	+26	LWDWL
4 Aston Villa	33	56	+14	WLDWWW
5 Newcastle	31	53	+23	LLWDD
6 Sheffield Wednesday	32	52	+5	WWLDW
7 Chelsea	33	49	+2	WWLLL
8 Wimbledon	32	46	+2	LDDLL
9 Tottenham	33	42	-5	WDLWL
10 Leeds	33	42	-8	WDLDD
11 Leicester	32	40	-7	DLDDD
12 Derby	33	39	-11	LWWWD
13 Blackburn	32	37	+1	DWLLD
14 Everton	33	37	-10	LWLLD
15 Coventry	34	36	-16	DLLWW
16 West Ham	32	34	-10	WDDWD
17 Sunderland	33	34	-19	WLLDD
18 † Middlesbrough	32	33	-8	WWWDD
19 Southampton	33	31	-10	LLDWD
20 Nottingham Forest	34	31	-23	DDDDL

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

SOUTHAMPTON

A Southampton University computer suggests that 39 points will guarantee FA Carling Premiership safety this season, but that Southampton have only a 41 per cent chance of getting them, rising to more than 60 per cent if they beat West Ham United at The Dell today. Unfortunately, while a victory would lift them above the visitors, Southampton have not won at home since December 21, and are without Matthew Le Tissier, who left the field after only 16 minutes at the Baseball Ground. **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Remember Ramon Vega, the Switzerland central defender who signed for Tottenham for £3.7 million from Cagliari, of Italy, three months ago? Not a lot of people do. Vega was booked in his first game, and replaced in the 69th minute; he was booked in his second game, and subsequently sent off; in his third game, he was substituted three minutes into the second half. He has since missed ten matches through injury and suspension but, allegedly, will return against Everton this afternoon. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

"I've no doubt he'll enjoy the challenge and bring success to the club." So did Harry Redknapp welcome Graeme Souness and his Southampton team to Upton Park in August. One relegation battle later, Redknapp goes to The Dell today seeking to inflict further misery on a rival manager that he has "got a lot of time for". Redknapp, who welcomes back Dicks from suspension, has said all winter that 42 points will be needed for survival. "I think we'll be all right," he said. **KP**

WIMBLEDON

With one win in ten, Wimbledon's only realistic route into Europe is via Wembley. The usual sense of humour was in evidence to those holding on the club switchboard, and hearing Oleta Adams singing *Get There If You Can*. Omens? The ticket allocation for the FA Cup semi-final at Highbury tomorrow includes seats at the Clock End, which their supporters have occupied during Wimbledon's nine successive unbeaten visits to Arsenal's ground. **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough

ARSENAL v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, 4-1, —, —, —, —, —, —, 1-1, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

ARSENAL (from): D Seaman, L Dixon, N Winterburn, M Keown, S Bould, D Platt, P Vieira, D Bergkamp, I Wright, S Hughes, R Parlour, I Rankin.

LEICESTER CITY (from): K Keller, P Kaamark, M Whitlow, S Guppy, M Elliott, C Hill, J Watts, N Lennon, S Campbell, C Wilson, G Parker, M Izzet, S Taylor, S Claridge, E Heskey, I Marshall, M Robins, K Poole

BLACKBURN ROVERS v MANCHESTER UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, —, —, 0-0, 2-0, 2-4, 1-2

HOW THEY LINE UP

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): T Flowers, J Kenna, H Berg, C Hendry, G Le Saux, I Pearce, N Marker, W McKinlay, L Bohinen, C Sutton, K Gallacher, G Donis, J Wilcox, P Pedersen, S Given, P Warhurst, T Sherwood, G Flitcroft.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): R van der Gouw, G Neville, G Pallister, R Johnsen, P Neville, D Beckham, N Butt, R Keane, E Cantona, A Cole, B Thornley, J Cruyff, K Poborsky, B McClair.

DERBY COUNTY v ASTON VILLA

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, 2-1, 0-1, 0-2, —, —, —, —, —

HOW THEY LINE UP

DERBY COUNTY (from): R Hoult, G Rowett, J Laursen, P McGrath, C Dailly, D Powell, M Solis, R van der Laan, P Trollope, A Asanovic, C Powell, A Ward, D Sturridge, P Wanchope, R Willems, P Simpson, M Carbon, M Taylor.

ASTON VILLA (from): M Oakes, M Bosnich, F Nelson, A Wright, U Ehiogu, S Staunton, G Southgate, A Townsend, M Draper, I Taylor, D Yorke, S Milosevic, M Hughes, R Scimeca.

EVERTON v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 0-0, 1-0, 2-1, 1-1, 3-1, 1-2, 0-1, 0-0, 1-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

EVERTON (from): N Southall, E Barrett, D Watson, C Short, D Unsworth, M Hottiger, G Stuart, G Speed, N Barmby, M Branch, D Ferguson, P Rideout, J Hills, P Gerrard, R Dunne, A Eaton, C Thomsen.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): I Walker, D Austin, J Edinburgh, J Scales, S Campbell, C Calderwood, R Vega, A Nielsen, S Carr, D Anderton, R Fox, N Fenn, A Sinton, E Sheringham, R Rosenthal, S Nethercott, E Baardsen, D Hill, P McVeigh.

SOUTHAMPTON v WEST HAM UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 2-1, 4-0, —, —, 1-0, —, 0-2, 1-1, 0-0

HOW THEY LINE UP

SOUTHAMPTON (from): M Taylor, J Dodd, C Lundekvam, F Benali, U van Gobbel, E Berkovic, R Slater, M Oakley, J Magilton, E Ostenstad, M Evans, S Charlton, S Basham, K Monkou, N Maddison, D Beasant, A Neilson

WEST HAM UNITED (probable): L Miklosko, M Rieper, R Hall, S Bilic, J Dicks, S Lazaridis, S Lomas, I Bishop, M Hughes, J Hartson, P Kitson. Substitutes: S Potts, H Porfirio, K Rowland, I Dowie, L Sealey.

TOMORROW

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v NEWCASTLE UNITED

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 0-1, 1-2, —, 2-2, —, —, 0-1, 0-0, 0-2.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K Pressman, I Nolan, S Nicol, D Walker, L Briscoe, G Whittingham, P Atherton, M Pembridge, B Carbone, D Hirst, A Booth, R Blinker, R Humphreys, M Clarke, S Oakes, W Collins, D Stefanovic.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S Hislop, W Barton, D Peacock, P Albert, R Elliott, K Gillespie, D Batty, R Lee, D Ginola, A Shearer, L Ferdinand, L Clark, F Asprilla, P Srnicek, P Beardsley, J Beresford.

SUNDERLAND v LIVERPOOL

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 0-1, —, —, —, —, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SUNDERLAND (from): L Perez, G Hall, D Kubicki, R Ord, L Howey, A Johnston, K Ball, P Bracewell, M Gray, C Waddle, P Stewart, N Quinn, J Eriksson, D Kelly, C Woods, P Williams, S Agnew.

LIVERPOOL (from): D James, S Harkness, D Matteo, M Wright, J Redknapp, J Barnes, S McManaman, S I Bjornebye, R Jones, R Fowler, S Collymore, B T Kvarme, M Thomas, A Warner, P Berger, P Babb, N Ruddock.

LEADING SCORERS

21: A Shearer (Newcastle United)
20: I Wright (Arsenal)
17: R Fowler (Liverpool)
16: D Yorke (Aston Villa)
14: F Ravanelli (Middlesbrough); O G Solskjaer (Manchester United)
13: L Ferdinand (Newcastle United)
12: D Dublin (Coventry City); M Le Tissier (Southampton)
11: D Bergkamp (Arsenal); C Sutton (Blackburn Rovers); S Claridge (Leicester); S Collymore (Liverpool); E Ekoku (Wimbledon)

LATEST BETTING

Premiership 4-9: Manchester United, 3-1: Liverpool, 5-1: Arsenal. FA Cup 6-4: Middlesbrough, Chelsea, 5-2: Wimbledon, 20-1: Chesterfield. Odds supplied by Ladbrokes

FA CUP SEMI-FINALS

CHESTERFIELD v MIDDLESBROUGH

TICKETS: Sold out

PREVIOUS CUP MEETINGS: 4-0 (first round, 1894-95), 1-1, 4-6 (third round, 1929-30); 2-1 (fourth round, 1946-47), 2-3 (1949-50)

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHESTERFIELD (from): W Mercer, J Hewitt, M Jules, M Patterson, M Williams, S Dyche, M Ebdon, A Morris, J Howard, C Beaumont, K Davies, I Dunn, C Perkins, A Lormor.

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): B Roberts, C Fleming, S Vickers, G Festa, V Kinder, C Blackmore, R Mustoe, A Moore, Emerson, Juninho, F Ravanelli, M Beck, D Whyte, C Hignett.

CHELSEA v WIMBLEDON

TICKETS: Sold out

PREVIOUS CUP MEETINGS: 2-2, 1-3 (1995-96).

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHELSEA (from): F Grodas, F Sinclair, F Leboeuf, S Clarke, D Petrescu, E Newton, R Di Matteo, D Wise, S Minto, M Hughes, G Zola, G Vialli, P Hughes, A Myers, E Johnsen, C Burley, J Morris, P Parker, N Clement, N Colgan.

WIMBLEDON (from): N Sullivan, K Cunningham, A Kimble, C Perry, D Blackwell, V Jones, R Earle, M Gayle, O Leonhardsen, D Holdsworth, E Ekoku, J Goodman, M Harford, P Fear.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

Today

10.55pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (highlights, includes Blackburn Rovers v Manchester United)

Tomorrow

11am Sky Sports 1 Goals on Sunday
11.50am BBC1 Match of the Day: Chelsea v Wimbledon (live)
2pm Sky Sports 1 Chesterfield v Middlesbrough (live)
6.50pm BBC1 Match of the Day (highlights of both FA Cup semi-finals)

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

[illegible]

Roberts in goal as biggest week beckons

By Peter Ball

MIDDLESBROUGH have been bedevilled with injuries for most of the season. There is no change tomorrow, as they embark on the most momentous four days in the club's history without their captain, Nigel Pearson, and with their new £1.3 million goalkeeper, Mark Schwarzer, on crutches.

Schwarzer is ineligible for the FA Cup semi-final against Chesterfield tomorrow, but he is now also doubtful for the Coca-Cola Cup final replay on Wednesday. His replacement will be Ben Roberts, 21, who began the season as the club's third-choice goalkeeper, but had just claimed a first-team place when Schwarzer was signed.

"*I hope to show I can do it on the big occasion,*" Roberts said yesterday. "You've got to be confident in yourself, otherwise you freeze. I'm really looking forward to Sunday. My mind has been on it for weeks — it's the biggest game of my career."

FA CUP

Bryan Robson also has confidence in his goalkeeper. "I've no worries about Ben," the Middlesbrough manager said. "His temperament is very good. He's so cool."

The loss of Pearson and Stamp, added to the absence of Cox, who is suspended, means that Robson is again *facing changes for what he* describes, with a relegation battle against Sunderland *next weekend, as "the biggest* week in the club's history".

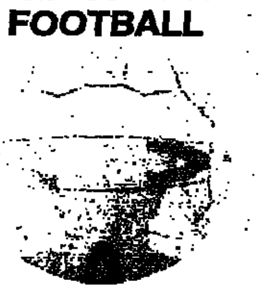
He added: "I seem to be *saying that every week, but I* don't mind repeating it to the players. We can make club history by reaching the FA Cup Final for the first time. I want to win the FA Cup, because I want us to be in the Cup Winners' Cup next season rather than the Uefa Cup — it's easier to win."

He would be ill-advised to say that around Anfield, but Robson is delighted with the venue for the game tomorrow. "We will respect Chesterfield," he said, "but the great thing for us is that the game is at Old Trafford, where the pitch is good, and that will suit us."

Keeper shapes up on a diet of chips

NEIL SULLIVAN

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL



By Russell Kempson

As legend has it, Neil Sullivan leapt high from his seat, punched the air and celebrated wildly when David Seaman, *the* England goalkeeper, saved the penalty from Gary McAllister, the Scotland captain, during the European championship last year. It was, after all, no more than a typical reaction from a true-blue Englishman, born and bred in Surrey and with three lions pounding on his chest.

In truth, Sullivan, the Wimbledon goalkeeper, watched relatively nonplussed in a beach-front bar in Barbados, where he was on holiday with his girlfriend, Julie, a Scot. "If I'd been jumping up and down as I was supposed to have been, she'd have given me a *swift right hook,*" *he said.* "Perhaps I did favour England, maybe I was egging them on inside, but I *don't* think I really showed it."

As he lounged in the shade, sipped a cool drink and tried to keep his emotions in check, the significance of the moment could not possibly have disturbed his idyllic break. In February, eight months later, it struck with a vengeance.

Sullivan, 27, who plays for Wimbledon against Chelsea in the FA Cup semi-final at *Highbury tomorrow,* was selected for the Scotland squad to meet Estonia in their restaged World Cup qualifying match in Monaco. He had discovered a Celtic connection (his maternal grandfather, Andy Campbell), pursued it with vigour and then persuaded Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, that he was good enough with a series of agile displays.

Although the story of Seaman's save had become distorted, the natives north of the border were enraged. "I know the rules allow it but I have to disagree," Tommy Docherty, the former Scotland manager, blustered. "It is farcical."

Several influential Scottish observers said it, too, their *poison pens dripping with* anti-Anglo vitriol. How could Brown pick a southern-softie Sassenach who had dared to revel in McAllister's misery?

Sullivan chuckles, which he does frequently. He has a disarming nature, appears at ease in any company, Crazy Gang or otherwise, and recalls the controversy with little more than amusement. "It was only one or two people *who got upset,*" *he said.* "It affected me a bit at first but once I had spoken to Craig *about it, everything was fine.* The real Scottish supporters have been superb."

Other *cynics might claim* that Sullivan is ideally qualified for the Scotland goalkeeping jersey after his much-highlighted errors, in successive matches, against Manchester United and Newcastle United at the start of this season. David Beckham, the Manchester United midfield player, outrageously lobbed the ball over him from inside the United half: David Batty, of Newcastle United, chipped in *his ill-directed headed* clearance from 35 yards. Again, he chuckles at the memories. "With Beckham's shot, I knew it was going to be close as soon as he hit it. Then I thought: 'Hello, it's getting closer.' Then I thought: 'I'm not going to get it.' It must have dropped an inch under the crossbar ... but at least I'm going to be on television for the next 50 years."

His team-mates still rib him about his place in history and, during training, often attempt to beat him from the halfway line. He has also had his *training shoes nailed to the* floor and Deep Heat surreptitiously smeared in his under*pants. "I suppose it's all part of* our tradition," he said.

Though he denies taking a ringleader's role in such pranks — "I just watch it all go on," he said, albeit unconvincingly — he admits a deep-rooted affection for the Wimbledon way. He joined the club in his early teens, as a goalkeeper, yet still turned out for Oakway Ajax, in the local Morden youth league, as a midfield player. "At that age, you just want to play football," *he said. "You don't care where* you play." Decision day arrived when, at 14, the Junction *Tavern pub side from nearby* Raynes Park called on his talents. "It was good fun for a while but when you've got a six-foot bruiser full of beer bearing down on you, you know it's time to get serious. I had to give it up, the club wouldn't let me play for them any more."

Sullivan accepts that he still has much to learn — he earned a regular first-team slot only last season, having twice recovered from a broken leg, *and has yet to start a game* after three Scotland call-ups. He also owes much to his *parents, Pamela and Terry.* "When I was a lad, they drove me everywhere," he said. "I can remember them watching me from the touchline, standing there freezing. They were brilliant."

Campbell has helped, too, his Glaswegian roots opening the international door for his grandson to squeeze through. The irony is not lost on Sullivan; seven years ago, Campbell moved to Weymouth. He still lives there.

MARC ASPLAND

Catch of the day: Sullivan, the Wimbledon goalkeeper, is ready for the challenge presented by Chelsea tomorrow

Dyche steps out of shadows to bask in limelight

Richard Hobson meets the Chesterfield

captain finally making the big time

For six years, Sean Dyche has wondered *whether tomorrow* would ever come. Since leaving Nottingham Forest in 1991 in search of regular first-team football, he has hankered after the big stage that hosts matches of true importance. His day is about to dawn.

Dyche, 25, will lead out Chesterfield in the FA Cup semi-final against Middlesbrough at Old Trafford tomorrow. The game has gripped the townsfolk like no other in the club's 131-year history. Before this season, Chesterfield had never progressed beyond the fifth round and had not even gone that far since 1950. Now they are just 90 minutes away from *Wembley.*

As a trainee at Forest, Dyche, a central defender, was surrounded by some of the most successful professionals of the day. The late 1980s saw Brian Clough assemble a side that included Des Walker, Steve Hodge, Neil Webb, Stuart Pearce and Nigel Clough and almost challenged for the title.

While he stayed on the right side of the manager, even to the point of helping Clough to tend the roses at his home in Quarndon, Dyche gradually realised that he would not break into the side. "I was No 41 out of 41 professionals and, even though I had a lot of affection for the place and the people there, I had to leave."

Clough smoothed his passage to Chesterfield on a free transfer, then managed by Paul Hart, a former Forest defender, whose thoughts on the game echoed those of his mentor. More than 200 League appearances later, Dyche still keeps the Clough philosophy in mind.

"Without any question, he is the most amazing man within the game I have ever come across," he said. "His great strength was that everything he said was so simple to understand and he was not as frightening as people have said. You find a lot of players leave Premier League clubs, as they now are, without getting near the team, but they have had such a good grounding they can cope immediately in another division."

The gulf between the big clubs and the smaller fry was massive then, but Dyche points to the progress of Chesterfield, and Stockport in the Coca-Cola Cup, as evidence that the gap is not widening as quickly as is commonly believed. Such a view is countered by the difference in earnings between Dyche and Fabrizio Ravanelli, the man he will mark tomorrow.

"His wage only affects me in that I wish it was mine," Dyche said. "To be fair, if his goals can take them so far in the two big cup competitions and keep them in the Premier League, he is probably worth £42,000 per week."

Dyche missed the fifth-round tie against Forest because of a hamstring injury and was undergoing rehabilitation when the Cup was brought to Saltergate for a photo-shoot before the quarter-final against Wrexham. He managed to make contact with the trophy in a separate event with Tony Humes, the Wrexham captain.

"We were lining up for pictures and the guy from the Football Association said we did not have to touch it if we were superstitious. I just hugged it. I cannot see that touching a piece of silverware is going to make us lose a game," Dyche said. *It* was the only time that he mentioned the word "lose".

Evans still to come to terms with Anfield's problems

By David Maddock

SITTING in the glare of television arc lights after Liverpool's wretched 3-0 defeat in Paris, Roy Evans appeared transfixed by the events that had unfolded around him. Yesterday morning, after a fretful sleep, he had clearly still to come to terms with the implications of the reverse — their worst in Europe for 18 years — against Paris Saint-Germain in the first leg of their Cup Winners' Cup semi-final on Wednesday.

Evans has tried to explain away the performance, and admits that he cannot. His side was simply too slow, in *thought* and *movement,* against opponents whose own standards were put into perspective by a 6-1 home thrashing from Juventus earlier in the season. The manager's *shock* was perhaps an indication of a dawning that there are fundamental problems at Anfield that cannot be rectified this season.

All season, Evans has argued that Barnes and *Redknapp can play together,* just as he has insisted that Fowler and Collymore are *compatible. The evidence* of Thursday evening would suggest otherwise and the manager's abiding faith may be his undoing.

Then there is the question of David James. He is a complex man, a player who thinks deeply — too deeply — about his performances and a player who thrives on confidence. That is shattered at present, but in indicating that the goalkeeper *will still* play against Sunderland tomorrow, Evans admitted that he *has few alternatives.*

The match in Paris was the first of four games in nine *days for Liverpool, a sequence* that will decide their fate this season. Evans, however, was trying to muster some enthusiasm yesterday as he attempted to rouse his players. "This is now a big, big week because we are still very much in contention in the Premiership," he said.

The impression lingers, however, that should Liverpool fail now, the question of why has it taken Evans until the final six games of the season to realise that he has inherent problems must be asked. It will be the board of directors asking such a question *should Liverpool fail to* finish in the top two in the Premiership.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket match*
Pools coupon numbers in brackets

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Arsenal v Leicester
(2) Blackburn v Manchester Utd
(3) Derby v Aston Villa
(4) Everton v Tottenham
(5) Southampton v West Ham

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	32	18	9	5	63	36	63
Arsenal	33	17	9	7	55	28	60
Liverpool	32	17	9	6	54	28	60
Aston Villa	33	16	8	9	42	28	56
Newcastle	31	15	8	8	60	37	53
Sheff Wed	32	13	13	6	43	38	52
Chelsea	33	13	10	10	52	50	49
Wimbledon	32	12	10	10	42	40	46
Tottenham	33	12	6	15	40	45	42
Leeds	33	11	9	13	26	34	42
Leicester	32	10	10	12	36	45	40
Derby	33	9	12	12	39	50	39
Blackburn	32	8	13	11	33	32	37
Everton	33	9	10	14	39	49	37
Coventry	34	8	12	14	32	48	36
West Ham	32	8	10	14	31	41	34
Sunderland	33	8	10	15	30	49	34
† Middlesbro	32	9	9	14	44	52	33
Southampton	33	7	10	16	43	53	31
Nottm Forest	34	6	13	15	29	52	31

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

Nationwide League
First division

(6) Barnsley v Charlton
(7) Birmingham v Huddersfield
(8) Bolton v Oxford Utd
(9) Norwich v Stoke
(10) Port Vale v Oldham
(11) Portsmouth v Tranmere
(12) QPR v Grimsby
(13) Reading v Wolverhampton
(—) Sheffield Utd v Crystal Palace
(14) Southend v Bradford
(15) Swindon v Ipswich
(16) West Bromwich v Manchester City

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	42	26	12	4	90	50	90
Barnsley	40	19	13	8	64	45	70
Wolves	41	20	9	12	60	45	69
Sheffield Utd	42	18	11	13	70	51	65
Port Vale	42	16	15	11	53	48	63
Portsmouth	41	18	8	15	52	45	62
Ipswich	41	16	13	12	59	49	61
C Palace	40	16	12	12	69	41	60
Norwich	42	16	11	15	61	63	59
Tranmere	41	16	11	14	57	50	59
Stoke	41	16	10	15	47	51	58
QPR	42	15	12	15	56	57	57
Charlton	41	15	10	16	49	56	55
Birmingham	41	14	13	14	46	47	55
West Brom	42	13	14	15	64	67	53
Swindon	42	15	8	19	52	63	53
Oxford Utd	42	14	9	19	57	61	51
Man City	40	14	9	17	50	52	51
Reading	41	13	12	16	50	58	51
Huddersfld	42	12	13	17	46	59	49
Bradford	41	10	11	20	42	67	41
Grimsby	40	9	12	19	52	72	39
Oldham	41	9	12	20	46	59	39
Southend	42	8	14	20	39	75	38

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Alfreton v Leek; *Bamber Bridge v Runcorn;* Blyth Spartans v Gainsborough; Chorley v Boston, Colwyn Bay v Bishop Auckland. Frickley v Barrow; Guiseley v Accrington Stanley; Hyde v Witton; Knowsley v Lancaster; Marine v *Emley; Spennymoor* v Buxton. First division: Ashton United v Droylsden; Stocksbridge PS: Atherton LR v Droylsden; Bradford Pk Ave v Netherfield, Curzon Ashton v Leigh; Flixton v Eastwood Town; Gretna v Farsley Celtic; *Harrogate Town* v Congleton; Matlock Town v Whitley Bay. Warrington v Worksop. Workington v Great Harwood

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Caernarfon v Flint Town; Caersws v Briton Ferry; Carmarthen Town v Welshpool, Holywell v Inter Cable-Tel; Rhyl v Llansantffraid. Ton *Pentre v Porthmadog.*

WELSH CUP: Semi-finals: Aberystwyth v Cwmbran (at Llanelli, 2.0); Barry v Conwy (at Newtown, 2.0).

BASS IRISH CUP: Semi-final: Cliftonville v Loughgall (at Windsor Park, Belfast)

Second division

(17) Blackpool v Bury
(18) Bournemouth v Gillingham
(19) Crewe v Bristol Rovers
(20) Millwall v Plymouth
(21) Notts County v Wycombe
(22) Peterborough v Preston
(23) Shrewsbury v Wrexham
(24) Stockport v Burnley
(25) Walsall v Luton
(26) Watford v York

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bury	40	21	10	9	58	36	73
Luton	40	19	12	9	65	41	69
* Brentford	40	18	14	8	54	38	68
Stockport	38	18	12	8	51	36	66
Crewe	40	20	5	15	50	42	65
Burnley	41	18	9	14	63	44	63
Watford	40	15	18	7	39	28	63
Bristol City	41	17	10	14	59	47	61
Walsall	41	17	10	14	50	45	61
Millwall	42	16	12	14	50	50	60
Wrexham	40	14	17	9	45	43	59
Blackpool	40	14	14	12	50	41	56
Chesterfield	39	14	14	11	36	34	56
Gillingham	40	15	9	16	49	54	54
Bournemouth	42	14	12	16	38	41	54
Bristol Rov	42	14	11	17	43	44	53
Preston	42	15	7	20	44	53	52
Plymouth	41	11	16	14	43	53	49
York	41	12	12	17	43	58	48
Shrewsbury	42	11	13	18	49	67	46
Wycombe	41	12	9	20	40	52	45
Peterborough	42	9	14	19	52	71	41
* Rotherham	42	6	13	23	34	63	31
Notts County	41	6	13	22	29	53	31

** not including last night's match*

Third division

(27) * Brighton v Wigan
(28) Cardiff v Chester
(29) Exeter v Lincoln
(30) Fulham v Northampton
(31) Hartlepool v Cambridge Utd
(32) Leyton Orient v Doncaster
(33) Rochdale v Darlington
(34) Scarborough v Hereford
(35) *Scunthorpe v Hull*
(36) Torquay v Barnet

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wigan	43	24	9	10	79	50	81
Fulham	42	23	11	8	69	37	80
* Carlisle	42	22	11	9	62	40	77
* Swansea	42	20	7	15	56	50	67
Chester	42	16	16	10	49	40	64
Northampton	42	17	11	14	61	43	62
Cardiff	41	18	8	15	51	49	62
Camb Utd	42	17	10	15	50	54	61
* Mansfield	42	15	15	12	43	39	60
Lincoln	42	16	11	15	63	64	59
Scarborough	42	15	14	13	62	64	59
Scunthorpe	41	17	7	17	56	57	58
* Colchester	42	14	16	12	53	47	58
Hull	41	12	17	12	38	40	53
Barnet	42	12	16	14	39	41	52
Darlington	42	13	10	19	60	71	49
Rochdale	42	11	16	15	49	55	49
Torquay	42	13	10	19	43	54	49
Doncaster	42	13	9	20	49	62	48
L Orient	42	12	12	18	43	53	48
Exeter	42	12	11	19	43	59	47
Hereford	42	11	11	20	46	60	44
Hartlepool	42	12	8	22	45	61	44
† Brighton	42	11	8	23	49	68	39

† Brighton deducted two points
** not including last night's matches*

Vauxhall Conference

(—) Bath v Rushden & Diamonds
(—) Dover v Gateshead
(—) Kettering v Morecambe
(—) Northwich v Hednesford
(—) Telford v Halifax
(—) *Welling v Southport*

Spalding Cup
Final, first leg

(—) Macclesfield v Kidderminster

FA Umbro Trophy
Semi-finals, second leg

(—) Gloucester (0) v Dag and Red (0)
(—) * Stevenage (0) v Woking (1)

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: *Premier division:* Finn Harps v Bohemians (7.30); Shelbourne v Derry, Sligo v Shamrock (7.30).

Tennents Scottish Cup
Semi-final

(—) Celtic v Falkirk
(at Ibrox Stadium)

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

(37) Dunfermline v Hibernian
(38) Hearts v Aberdeen
(39) Motherwell v Raith

First division

(40) Airdrie v Dundee
(41) East Fife v Greenock Morton
(42) Partick v St Johnstone
(43) St Mirren v Clydebank

Second division

(44) Ayr v Stenhousemuir
(45) Brechin v Livingston
(46) Dumbarton v Clyde
(47) Hamilton v Stranraer
(48) Queen of South v Berwick

Third division

(49) Alloa v Ross County
(—) *Arbroath v Montrose*
(—) Forfar v East Stirling
(—) Inverness CT v Albion
(—) Queen's Park v Cowdenbeath

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Cambridge City v Newport AFC; Chelmsford v Burton Albion; Cheltenham v Hastings; Crawley v Sudbury Tn, Dorchester v Halesowen, Gresley v Salisbury. Merthyr v Nuneaton, Sittingbourne v *King's Lynn:* Worcester City v Ashford. *Midland division:* Bedworth v Grantham; Corby v RC Warwick, Dudley Town v Raunds T. Evesham v Ilkeston, Hinckley Town v Stourbridge; Moor Green v VS Rugby; Paget R v Tamworth: Redditch v Solihull Boro; Rothwell v Bilston; Stafford v Shepshed D. Southern division: Cinderford v Erith and Belvedere; Cirencester Town v Margate, Clevedon v Weymouth, Dartford v Weston-super-Mare; Fisher London v Trowbridge, Fleet T v Tonbridge Angels; Havant v Forest Green; Newport (IoW) v Yate; *St Leonards* v Fareham; Waterlooville v Buckingham Town, Witney v Bashley

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Basildon U v Hullbridge Sports; Brentwood v Eton Manor, Saffron Walden v *East Ham; Sawbridgeworth v Ilford. Cup:* Semi-finals, second leg: Southend Manor v Ford, Stansted v Concord Rangers

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Backwell v Taunton; Bideford v Calne; Odd Down v Barnstaple, *Paulton R* v Elmore; Torrington v Brislington, Westbury v Bridport

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Bishop's Stortford v Kingstonian; Chertsey v Bromley, Dulwich v Hitchin, Heybridge v Aylesbury: Oxford City v Carshalton: Purfleet v Boreham Wood; St Albans v Grays, Sutton United v Yeovil; Yeading v Harrow. First division: Abingdon Town v Marlow; Aldershot Town v Worthing; Barton Rovers v Maidenhead United, Billericay v Tooting and Mitcham; Bognor Regis v Wokingham; Chesham v Berkhamsted; Hampton v Basingstoke; Leyton Pennant v Canvey Island, Uxbridge v Thame, Walton and *Hersham v Croydon; Whyteleafe v Molesey.* Second division: Cheshunt v Chalfont St Peter; Edgware v Bedford T, Egham v Bracknell; H Hempstead v Banstead, Horsham v Barking, Hungerford v Windsor *and Eton, Leatherhead v Wivenhoe; Leighton* Town v Wembley; Tilbury v Collier Row and Romford, Ware v Metropolitan Police: Witham v Dorking. Third division: Braintree v Camberley; Clapton v Flackwell Heath; Epsom and Ewell v Hertford, Hornchurch v Lewes, Kingsbury v Wealdstone. Wingate and Finchley v Tring

LONDON SPARTAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Amersham v Brook House; Brimsdown v Harefield, Croydon v Cockfosters; Haringey v Hillingdon Boro: Waltham Abbey v Barkingside: Woodford v Harwell.

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Bedfont v Westfield, Corinthian-Casuals v Netherne; Cranleigh v Chipstead; Farnham v Hartley Wintney: Feltham v Ashford, Merstham v *Viking Sports; Raynes Park Vale v Cove,* Walton Casuals v Sandhurst

MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Arlesey v Langford: Bedford v Biggleswade, Harpenden v *Brache Sparta; Hoddesdon v Royston;* Letchworth v London Colney, Potters Bar v Buckingham Athletic.

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Diss v Sudbury Res; Fakenham v Halstead; Felixstowe P and T v Harwich and Parkeston, Great Yarmouth v Soham; March v Gorleston: Stowmarket v Newmarket, Sudbury W v Tiptree. Warboys v Wroxham; Watton v Clacton: Woodbridge Town v Wisbech

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston v Northampton Spencer. Bourne v Cogenhoe; Eynesbury v Potton; Kempston v Stamford: Long Buckby v Desborough, St Neots v Spalding, Stotfold v S and L Corby

OLD BOYS' LEAGUE: Premier division: Clapham OX v Old Vaughanians; Glyn OB v *Old Meadonians, Latymer OB v Cardinal* Manning OB. Old Hamptonians v Old Ignatians. Old Tenisonians v Old Aloysians

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Lymington v Aerostructures; Andover v Downton; BAT v Brockenhurst; Bemerton Heath v Totton; Christchurch v *Bournemouth; Eastleigh v Romsey. Ports*mouth v Whitchurch; Ryde Sports v Petersfield; Thatcham Town v Gosport; Wimborne Town v Cowes Sports

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Burgess Hill v Arundel; Hassocks v Shoreham; Mile Oak v Saltdean; Oakwood v Pagham; Portfield v Whitehawk; Ringmer v Horsham YMCA; Selsey v *Peacehaven and Telscombe; Southwick v* Langney Sports; Three Bridges v Hailsham, Wick v Eastbourne Town.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Corinthian v Woolwich; Cray v Sheppey; Crockenhill v Herne Bay. Faversham v Greenwich; Folkestone Invicta v Chatham; Furness v Tunbridge Wells; Lordswood v Hythe; Ramsgate v Whitstable Town, Slade Green v Deal; Thamesmead v Beckenham

HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Almondsbury v Fairford; Bicester v Shortwood; Brackley v Endsleigh; Carterton *v Swindon Supermarine; Highworth* v Didcot; Tuffley v Kintbury, Wantage v Burnham.

ENDSLEIGH MIDLAND COMBINATION: *Premier division:* David Lloyd v Coventry Sphinx, Handrahan Timbers v Boldmere S; Kings Heath v Bilston Community College; Massey Ferguson v Meir KA, Richmond Swifts v Alvechurch, Shirley v Kenilworth; Studley BKL v Southam; Wellesbourne v Highgate; West Midland Fire Service v Coleshill; Worcestero v Knowle.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Belper Town v North *Ferriby:* Denaby v Ashfield; Glasshoughton Welfare v Ossett Town; Hatfield Main v Arnold; Hucknall Town v Maltby MW: Ossett Albion v Selby; Pickering v Armthorpe Welfare; Sheffield v Pontefract Cols. *Thackley v Brigg Town*

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Chadderton v Atherton Collieries: Darwen v Burscough; Eastwood H v Prescot Cables; Nantwich Town v Blackpool Rovers; Penrith v Glossop North End; St Helens v Newcastle Town; Salford v Kidsgrove; Trafford v Holker Old Boys; Vauxhall GM v Bootle

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Bedlington Terriers v Whickham; Chester-le-Street v Consett; Durham City v Guisborough Town; Easington v Stockton, Morpeth Town v *Whitby Town; Murton v Billingham* Synthonia, Tow Law Town v RTM Newcastle.

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Brora v Fort William, Cove v Clachnacuddin; Deveronvale v Nairn County; Keith v Rothes; Lossiemouth v *Fraserburgh: Peterhead v Buckie Thistle;* Wick Academy v Forres Mechanics

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Cambridge Utd v Millwall (11.0); Chelsea v Portsmouth (11.0); Fulham v Watford (10.30); Gillingham v Southend (10.45); Ipswich v Queens Park Rangers (11.0); Leyton Orient v Tottenham (at Spurs Lodge, 10.30), Norwich v Charlton (11.0); West Ham v Arsenal (11.0). Second division: Colchester v Bristol Rovers (12.0); Luton v Brentford (11.0); Oxford Utd v Bournemouth (11.0); Reading v Crystal Palace (11.0); Southampton v Bristol City *(11.0); Swindon v Barnet (11.0), Tottenham* v Brighton (11.15); Wimbledon v Wycombe (11.0).

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bloxwich S v Darlaston; Lye Town v Walsall Wood; *Malvern T* v Ludlow T; Tividale v Wednesfield: Westfields v Gornal Res; Wolverhampton C v Hill Top R; Wolverhampton United v *Stafford T.*

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Barwell v *Halesowen H;* Boldmere St M v Chasetown; Hinckley Athletic v Bridgnorth; Pershore T v Rushall O; Rocester v Stratford T; Sandwell v Oldbury U; Shifnal T v *Blakenhall; Stapenhill v Pelsall V.*

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Carthusians v Lancing; Etonians v Brentwoods; Foresters v Chigwellians; Reptonians v Cholmeleians.

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: First division: Carshalton v Old Esthameians; East Barnet OG v NatWest Bank; Old Actonians v Crouch End Vampires

SOUTHERN OLYMPIAN LEAGUE: Senior one: Albanian v St Mary's Coll; Old Finchleians v Ulysses; Southgate County v Nottsborough; Wandsworth Bor v Witan

AFA SENIOR CUP: Final: Civil Service v *Lensbury.*

SCHOOLS MATCH: English Schools Goodyear Under-16 Trophy: Semi-final replay: City School, Sheffield v Newall Green, Manchester (at Woodburn Stadium, *11.0). Northern Counties Under-16* Championship: Final: Northumberland v Merseyside (at RTM Newcastle, 1.30). Inter-association: Brighton v Luton; Leeds v *Barnsley;* Preston v *Liverpool,* Swindon v Wolverhampton; *Wirral v St Helens.*

VOLLEYBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Men: First division: Ealing v Warwick *(7.0);* Lewisham v Tooting (2.30); Liverpool v Stoke (5.30); Leeds v Crofton (2.30); Wessex v Whitefield (6.30).

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Courage Clubs Championship
First division

Bath v Leicester (2.15)
Northampton v London Irish
Orrell v Bristol
Sale v Gloucester
Saracens v Wasps

Second division

London Scottish v Rotherham
Moseley v Bedford
Newcastle v Coventry
Rugby v Blackheath
Wakefield v Nottingham
Waterloo v Richmond

Third division

Clifton v Leeds
Fylde v Harrogate
Havant v Exeter
Liverpool St Helens v Wharfedale
Morley v London Welsh
Otley v Rosslyn Park
Redruth v *Lydney*
Walsall v *Reading*

Fourth division north

Birmingham/Solihull v Winnington Park
Kendal v Hereford
Lichfield v Sandal
Manchester v Sheffield
Preston Grasshoppers v Stourbridge
Stoke-on-Trent v Nuneaton
Worcester v Aspatria

Fourth division south

Barking v Cheltenham
Berry Hill v North Walsham
Henley v Charlton Park
High Wycombe v Tabard
Met Police v Weston-super-Mare
Newbury v Camberley
Plymouth v Askeans

SOUTH WEST: First division: Bridgwater v Barnstaple; Camborne v Stroud, Launceston v St Ives; Matson v Maidenhead; *Salisbury v Gloucester Old Boys; Torquay* v Brixham

MIDLANDS: First division: Mansfield v Leamington; Scunthorpe v Hinckley; Stafford v *Derby;* Stockwood Park v Camp Hill; Syston v *Burton,* Westleigh v *Broadstreet;* Whitchurch v Belgrave; Wolverhampton v Barkers Butts.

NORTH: First division: Bradford and Bingley v Wigton, Bridlington v New Brighton; *Macclesfield* v *Broughton Park;* Sedgley Park v Hull Ionians; West Park Bramhope v Tynedale, Widnes v Stockton.

Representative matches

Combined Services v England *Students*
(at Twickenham, 12.30)
Royal Navy v The Army
(at Twickenham)
England Colts v Wales Youth
(at Iffley Road, Oxford)

Swalec Cup
Semi-final

Swansea v Ebbw Vale
(at Cardiff, 2.45)

Welsh League
First division

Dunvant v Caerphilly (2.30)

Second division

Aberavon v Blackwood (2.30)
Abercynon v South Wales Police (2.30)
Llandovery v Pontypool (2.30)
Ystradgynlais v Cardiff Institute (2.30)

THIRD DIVISION: Merthyr v Kenfig Hill; Pyle v Tondu, Mountain Ash v Rumney.

Insurance Corporation League
First division

Blackrock Coll v Ballymena (2.30)
Cork Constitution v Old Crescent (2.30)
Dungannon v St Mary's College (2.30)
Instonians v Shannon (2.30)
Old Belvedere v Garryowen (2.30)
Terenure Coll v Lansdowne (2.30)
Young Munster v Old Wesley (2.30)

Second division

Bective Rangers v UCC (2.30)
Clontarf v Greystones (2.30)
DLSP v Skerries (2.30)
Derry v NIFC (2.30)
Malone v Dolphin (2.30)
Sunday's Well v Highfield (2.30)
Wanderers v Monkstown (2.30)

SCHOOLS MATCH: Scotland v Ireland (at Millbrae)

RUGBY LEAGUE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Premier division: Dudley Hill v Egremont (2.30); Oldham St Anne's v West Hull (2.30); Woolston v Wigan St Patrick's (2.30). First division: Askam v Walney Central (2.30); Oulton v Eastmoor (2.30); Thornhill v Millom (2.30); Wigan St Jude's v Blackbrook (2.30). *Second division: Eccles v Ovenden (2.30);* Shaw Cross v York Acorn (2.30), Skirlaugh v Redhill (2.30)

HOCKEY

HA CUP: Quarter-final: Old Loughtonians v Reading (at Luxborough Lane, Chigwell, 1.30)

FIVE COUNTIES TOURNAMENT: Cheshire, Durham, Kent, Lancashire, Yorkshire (at Abbeydale, Sheffield, 10.30)

CLUB MATCHES: Aldridge v Kidderminster; Bath Buccaneers v West Wilts; Bedford v Peterboro Ath; Bishop's Stortford *v Braintree; Lloyds Bank v Beckenham,* Maidenhead v Fareham; Mid-Sussex v Tunbridge Wells; Old Edwardians v Newbury; Wokingham v Staines

WOMEN'S NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Clifton v Sutton (12.30); *Hightown* v Slough (at Formby CC, 12.0); Leicester v Doncaster (12.30); Trojans v Ipswich (1.30). First division: Blueharts v Canterbury (2.0), Bradford v Wimbledon (1.50); Chelmsford v Bracknell (11.15); Olton v Sunderland Bedans (2.0). Second division: Exmouth v St Albans; Loughborough Students v West Witney (2.30); Sherwood v Ealing (12.0); Woking v Old Loughtonians (2.0).

MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Bedford v West Bromwich; Hampton v Crimson Ramblers; Kettering v North Staffs; Leicester v Pickwick.

NORTH LEAGUE: Chester v Carlisle; Liverpool v York; Poynton v Blackburn; Welton v Sheffield

SOUTH LEAGUE: Dulwich v City of Portsmouth; Hampstead v Southampton; Reading v Worthing; *Tulse Hill* v Winchmore Hill; Winchester v Horsham.

WEST LEAGUE: Exeter v St Austell, Leominster v Wimborne; Redland v Bournemouth; Yate v Cheltenham.

CLUB MATCHES: East Gloucs v Cardiff Athletic; Penarth v Newport; Sevenoaks v Redbridge.

OTHER SPORT

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: World League (WLAF): Amsterdam v Scottish Claymores (7.0).

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Championship play-offs: First leg: Leicester v Leopards (7.30). National League: Men: First division: Play-offs: Quarter-finals: Coventry v Westminster. Guildford v Oxford; Plymouth v Stockton: Ware v Cardiff. Second division: Play-offs: Quarter-finals: London v Slough; Solihull v Northampton, South Wales v South Bank; Thames Valley v Derby. Women: First division: Play-offs: Quarter-finals: Birmingham v Crystal Palace, Rhondda v Spelthorne. Sheffield v Nottingham, Thames Valley v Barking and Dagenham

BOWLS: Men's British championships (at *Melton Mowbray).*

BOXING: Light-middleweight bout: Ryan Rhodes (Sheffield) v Lindon Scarlett (Dudley) (at Hillsborough Leisure Centre, Sheffield)

LACROSSE: Shepherds Friendly Society League: Premier division: Boardman and Eccles v Moorthorpe; Heaton Mersey v Timperley; Old Waconians v Mellor; Poynton v Stockport.

SPEEDWAY: Speedway Star Cup: Coventry v Belle Vue (7.30). Elite League: Bradford v Peterborough (7.30); Swindon v Ipswich (7.30). Premier League Cup: *Berwick v Edinburgh (7.0);* Stoke v Newcastle (7.30).

SWIMMING: European Championship trials (at Sheffield).

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket match*

FA Cup
Semi-finals

* Chelsea v Wimbledon
(at Highbury, 12.0)
* Chesterfield v Middlesbrough
(at Old Trafford)

FA Carling Premiership

Sheffield Wednesday v Newcastle
Sunderland v Liverpool

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: St Leonards v Cinderford.

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Ebbw Vale v Connah's Quay

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: *Premier division:* Cork v Home Farm (2.0), UCD v Dundalk (3.15)

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Everton v Ilkeston (at Marine FC, 12.30): Wembley v Doncaster (at Wembley FC, 2.0).

FA WOMEN'S LEAGUE: Northern division: Aston Villa v Sheffield Wednesday; Garswood St Helens v Blyth Spartans. Southern division: Three Bridges v Oxford Res.

HOCKEY

HA CUP: Quarter-finals: Cannock v Teddington (at Morris Ground, 2.30): St Albans v Chelmsford (at Clarence Park, 2.0), Surbiton v Guildford (at Sugden Road, *2.0)*

FIVE COUNTIES TOURNAMENT: Cheshire, Durham, Kent, Lancashire, Yorkshire (at Abbeydale, Sheffield, 10.0)

WELSH LEAGUE: *Play-off:* Whitchurch v Monsanto (at WIS, Cardiff, 12.30).

WOMEN'S UNDER-19 CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP: East (at Essex University, Colchester), Midlands (at St Margaret's, Leicester) North (at Concord, Sheffield): South (at Bisham Abbey); West (at Beggar Bush, Bristol)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Stones Super League

Castleford v Warrington (3.30)
Halifax v London
Oldham v Paris Saint-Germain (6.35)

First division

Featherstone v *Hull* (3.30)
Hull KR v Keighley
Swinton v Whitehaven
Wakefield v Workington (3.30)

Second division

Barrow v Doncaster
Hunslet v Prescot (3.30)
Leigh v Batley

BNFL NATIONAL YOUTH CUP: First *round:* Under-18: *Barrow Island* v Woolston Rovers, Beverley v Siddal, Blackbrook v Wigan St Patrick's, Eccles v Pilkington Recs; Elland v Wigan St Jude's, Hindley v Dewsbury Moor; Illingworth v Wath Brow Hornets; Lunts Heath Lions v Leigh Miners Rangers, Milford v Folly Lane; Oulton Raiders v Egremont Rangers; Parkside Golborne v Skirlaugh; Queensbury v Featherstone Amateur; Redhill v Leigh East; Saddleworth Rangers v East Leeds; Thornhill v Heworth, West Hull v Stanningley Under-16: Ashton v Cockermouth, Barrow Island v Churwell; Clayton v Saddleworth Rangers; Dewsbury Moor v Oulton Raiders, East Hull v Shaw Cross; East Leeds v Moldgreen; Hull BC v Fish Trades; St John Fisher v Kells; Widnes Tigers v Smawthorne

RUGBY UNION

Swalec Cup
Semi-final

Llanelli v Cardiff
(at Swansea, 3.05)

WELSH LEAGUE: Third division: Narberth v Llanharan

WOMEN'S BREAD FOR LIFE CUP: Semi-*finals:* Richmond v *Wasps,* Saracens v Clifton

OTHER SPORT

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: World League (WLAF). *London Monarchs v Frankfurt* (at Stamford Bridge, 3.0)

ATHLETICS: London Marathon

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Cham*pionship play-offs: First leg: Manchester v* Sheffield (6.30). Chester v Birmingham (6.0). Second leg: Leopards v Leicester (5.0)

BOWLS: Men's British championships (at *Melton Mowbray)*

MOTORCYCLING: British Superbike championship (at Donington Park)

SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Eastbourne v Bradford (3.30). Premier League Knockout *Cup: Glasgow v Sheffield (6.30). Newcastle* v Stoke (6.30). Individual: Central Lincolnshire Trophy (at Skegness, 6.30). Amateur League: Mildenhall v Ryde (IoW) (3.30).

SWIMMING: European championship trials (at Sheffield).

TABLE TENNIS: Commonwealth championships (at Glasgow).

VOLLEYBALL: National League: Men: First division: *Guildford v Leeds (2.30),* Salford v Loughborough (2.15): Orpington v Birmingham (2.30), Essex v Britannia (1.30); Sheffield v Liverpool (2.30).

Rob Hughes watches golf's latest phenomenon make his mark in the first round

Tiger roars back to master Augusta

When Tiger Woods stepped off the 18th green at Augusta on Thursday, his first round at the Masters as a professional golfer, it was no exaggeration at all to feel the pull of destiny around him. The gallery he attracts is almost a danger to him and he admits "it gets scary when you look back and you see adults getting pushy, and little kids getting trampled down".

There is, of course, security, and Woods is already secure in the millions of dollars that the almost fanatical acclaim has quickly brought him. When he came down the back nine of this extraordinary course on Thursday — where he made an eagle-three at the 15th and birdies at four of the other holes — he became one of only 12 men ever to record 30 for those nine holes — six under par.

MASTERS 97

After taking 40 for the front nine, his remarkable turnaround gave him a first-round score of 70, two under par. He will win this tournament if he sustains anything like that form. If he does not capture the Masters this weekend, then Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer are all the witnesses you need to state that this young player will definitely be the master in the future.

We cannot begin to unravel the nature-nurture conundrum as to whether golfing ability this great is born or made. Allegedly, Tiger was six months old when people observed him eyeing his father hit golf balls into a net in the garage. He was two when he appeared on *The Mike Douglas Show* on US television, putting with Bob Hope. He shot 48 for nine holes at the age of three... and it goes on, the profiling of an infant turning into a boy, graduating into a student at Stanford University and reaching the precipice of greatness as a slender 6ft 2in apprentice to the gods of golf.

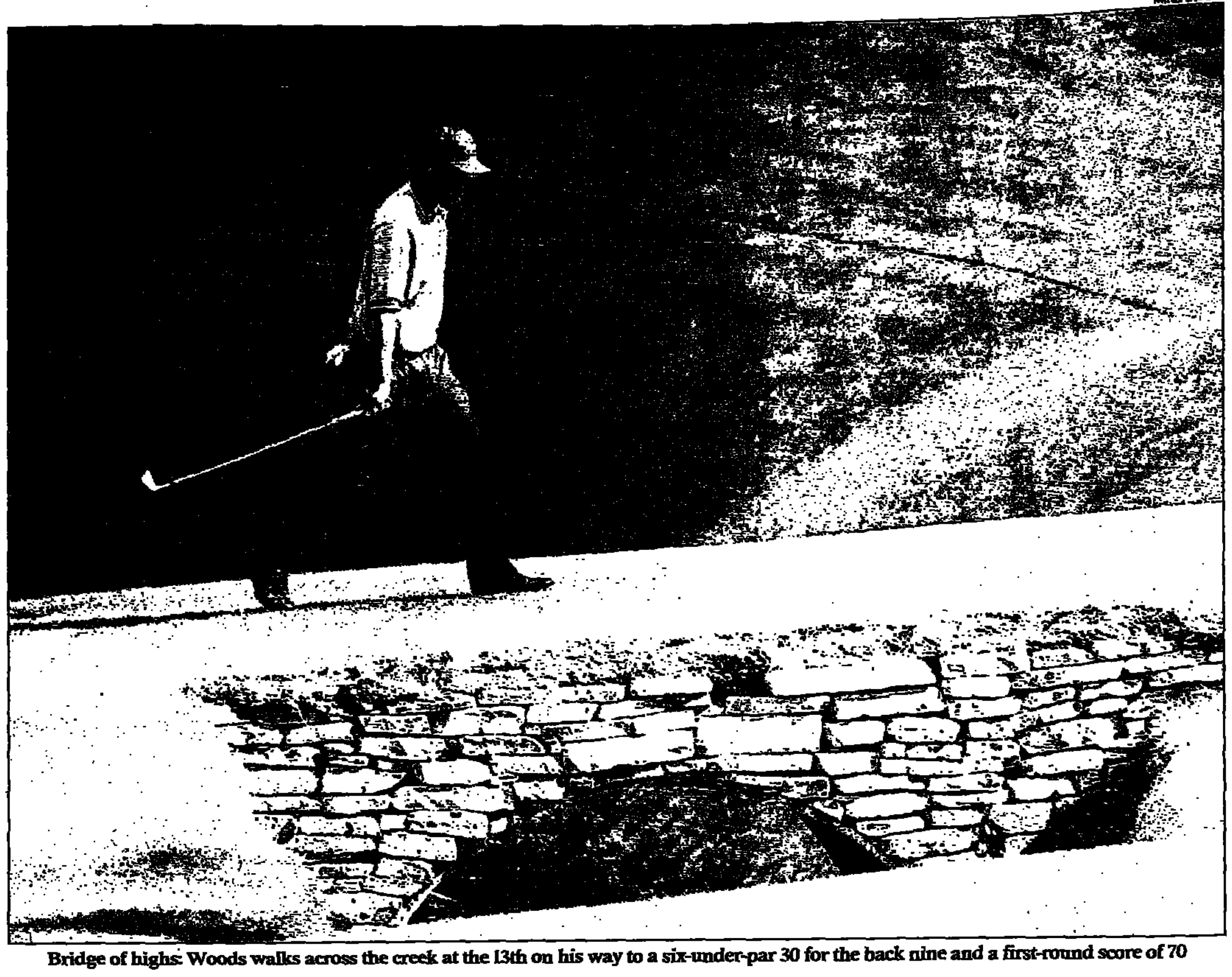
His tournament winnings already top $1 million and are dwarfed by the $40 million per annum that Nike pays him to claim the very ground that he treads, to make him an icon. At 21, he has his own foundation and he intends, if ever there is time, to give clinics. Meanwhile, he is fully engaged, searching for something close to perfection, close to the round of 59 on his own local course that demonstrated his form coming into the Masters.

For one whose frame is almost whippet-lean, he produces a power that flies the ball farther than any of his fellow professionals. His right leg stands very square and strong, the power develops through the torque of his upper body and the swing is almost ferociously fast, but clean. It *looks* free of stress, free of mechanism; it *looks* like nature's work.

And when the course plays the devil's game with him, when a ball lips the cup, he shows exasperation. He blows out his cheeks and in an instant it is gone. The look in the dark eyes is that of a child momentarily thwarted and then, as if with a shrug of resignation, he marches on: the next hole, the next challenge to his destiny.

People here remind him of Jackie Robinson, who, 50 years ago as a baseball player, broke the barrier of American sporting prejudice. Robinson, Woods is aware, was a very fine and obsessed golfer, also. When the phenomenon that is Woods is compared to the prowess of Bob Beamon, Carl Lewis, Muhammad Ali, it is curious that the name of Arthur Ashe is missing. Surely it is Ashe, who obliged people in the once similarly pristine, white world of tennis to acknowledge his game, his dignity and his intellect, who should be the role model for this modern-day sensation?

MIKE BLAKE



Bridge of highs: Woods walks across the creek at the 13th on his way to a six-under-par 30 for the back nine and a first-round score of 70

There was something of Ashe, the burning inside but a phlegmatic outward appearance, when Woods played his most accomplished stroke of the first round. It came, not on the back nine, but at the par-five 8th, where Woods took bogey.

He hooked his tee-shot into the dogwoods and pines to the left of this uphill hole. The ball rested on dirt one foot to the right of a cart track. He picked out a seven-iron as he looked towards the top of the tall pines. "Initially, I was going to hit and hope," he said later. "Then I saw this little gap." Exchanging his club for a six-iron, he then deftly guided the ball through two trees and safely back into a playable position. He had stood with his left foot against a kerb, his right on the asphalt cart track; he had negotiated ten trees; he was on course for a great recovery.

"I knew what I had been doing wrong in the outward nine," Woods said. "I was in such a bad position at the top of my backswing. After I realised that, it was just a matter of trusting the motion."

Whether he can trust the media and the public to watch him progress without envy is another matter. Yesterday the press was already highlighting the overselling of Woods by Nike and by International Management Group, who last Sunday paid for a one-hour television commercial "Tiger Woods: Son, Hero, Champion". And by his father, Earl Woods, who had gloated in the magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, that "Tiger will do more than any other man in history to change the course of humanity".

Will no one let Woods grow into his apparent destiny? "He's a young man of 21," Nicklaus said. "People are expecting him to handle it like a 35-year-old. They monitor every move, I didn't have that: nobody monitored the $33 I won in my first week."

Palmer, who shot his worst two rounds in 43 years as a competitor at Augusta for a two-round aggregate of 176, 32 over par, asked: "How many 20-year-old men are in the position of Tiger Woods?" The young man had complained that he has not had the time or freedom to be a normal 21-year-old. "Hey," Palmer told him, "that's the price you have to pay, whether it's financial or as a champion."

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright, let us hope you do not blow out like candlelight.

SWIMMING: PALMER AND WILSON FAIL TO HIT QUALIFYING MARK AFTER BECOMING EMBROILED IN TACTICAL STRUGGLE

Smith earns rightful reward for bold approach

Palmer: rueful

By Craig Lord

BRITAIN is blessed with three world-class ironmen, the loners who devote themselves to the 1,500 metres freestyle, the longest race in the pool. In Sheffield yesterday only one of them, Graeme Smith, had the steel to qualify for the European championships, which take place in Seville in August.

Winner of the Olympic bronze medal in Atlanta, the 21-year-old undergraduate was determined not to get caught in a cat-and-mouse battle with his rivals. He charged ahead early at a pace that left him the easy victor with a time of 15min 11.60sec.

Paul Palmer, 22, and Ian Wilson, 22, watched each other instead of the clock and paid the price when they failed to meet the qualifying standard. Palmer — the Olympic silver medal-winner in the 400 metres freestyle — missed out by a frustrating 0.22sec after a race that had taken him 15min 28.79sec. Wilson's time was 15min 35.64sec.

Their efforts of yesterday wasted, the rivals must now face a fresh test at the national championships at Crystal Palace in July, with only one place left in the 1,500m freestyle team for Seville. "I feel so stupid," said Palmer, covering his face with one of the giant paddle-like hands that have propelled him to two silver medals at senior European level and three European junior titles.

"I wasn't being cocky, just trying to scrape in and all the stuff about me just being in there to keep Ian off the team is rubbish — I believe I can win that race come Seville, I'm in with a shout."

Palmer, who has spent only three weeks in the new Olympic pool at the University of Bath, his new training home away from Lincoln, said: "In my limited experience of 1,500s, I know that the day after a hard race your arms are knackered — I was holding something in reserve."

That reserve was for the 400 metre freestyle today, which will take Palmer's race schedule to 4,200 metres in three days, a régime dictated by the lunacy of cramming a six-day international programme into four days.

Karen Pickering, of Ipswich, shared the fate of Palmer and Wilson. The former 200 metres short-course world champion over 200 metres freestyle, Pickering finished third in her specialist race yesterday, a tight final resulting in a place in Seville for Vicky Horner. Pickering, who was involved in a car crash last December, has yet to recover her best form.

Nicholas Shakell found his, however. A British exile at college in the United States, Shakell clocked 50.04sec to break the British record for 100 metres freestyle. He swam slightly slower in the final and left Britain still in search of a sub-50sec swim. That barrier was first broken 21 years ago by Jim Montgomery.

The only race yesterday in which two swimmers qualified for Seville was the 200 metres backstroke, in which Joanne Deakins was pressed by Helen Don-Duncan, at 15 nine years younger than Deakins. Don-Duncan finished 0.28sec behind Deakins in 2min 14.63sec, a British junior record.

Others who made the team for Spain were Margaretha Pedder, Sarah Collings and Adrian Turner.

☐ Tony Ali, of Sheffield, won the silver medal in the one-metre springboard at the European diving cup in Belluno, Italy.

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RUGBY UNION: SARACENS PREPARE TO DEFEND UNBEATEN LEAGUE RECORD AT ENFIELD STADIUM

Wasps seek to breach the barricades

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

ENFIELD does not resound in rugby's annals as a fortress — not compared, say, with Kingsholm or Bath's Recreation Ground. Yet no club has beaten Saracens there in the Courage Clubs Championship this season and it is the ground where Wasps, the league leaders, saw their Pilkington Cup hopes crumble back in January.

The short trip today from one part of north London to another, therefore, has even greater significance than usual. Wasps have been alternately cast down and buoyed-up by the see-saw of league fortunes this month, yet the one plain fact is that if they continue to win, the title will be theirs and they can laugh at those who do not perceive them as championship material.

They take a XV unchanged from that which started against Bath last Sunday, a tribute to the players' fitness that Saracens — still without the injured Michael Lynagh — would like to emulate. There are only nine survivors of the lost cup match and the quality of rugby that Wasps are playing is a couple of notches higher than Saracens achieved in their disappointing midweek game against Harlequins. Whether the Enfield factor — seven league wins and a draw with Sale — will lift them remains a moot point. Their fans will be lifted by a report that they are intrested in signing Ieuan Evans, the Wales wing.

The "Rec" at Bath has not proved so forbidding to opponents this year yet there is no doubt that the atmosphere for the visit of Leicester will be electric. This is the club that removed Bath from the cup, this the club that must win if the pursuit of Wasps is to be sustained and that returns to something approaching full strength with Niall Malone at full back, where he played so well in the victory over Wasps, and six British Lions.

TOP FIVE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wasps	18	14	1	3	553	344	29
Leicester	17	13	0	4	519	272	26
Bath	17	11	1	5	592	324	23
Harlequins	17	11	0	6	618	329	22
Sale	16	10	1	5	440	325	21

Should Bath lose, of course, their European aspirations are threatened. They may be third in the table this morning but they would be within the reach of Harlequins, Sale and even Gloucester as the pursuit of a Heineken Cup place warms up — if indeed the Heineken Cup in its suggested formula happens. So great is the unhappiness among French clubs at the proposed European season that they are prepared to offer an alternative arrangement, with commercial backing, that would exclude the Celtic sides.

If it is fortresses we are talking about, however, then Kingsholm's reputation remains safe, but in whose hands? While Gloucester players trek to Sale, their administrators addressed the membership last night, suggesting that the sale of up to 75 per cent of shares in the club would raise the necessary investment to put Gloucester among the title contenders in the future.

The money is unlikely to be forthcoming from the club's 2,300-membership but Gloucester hope for the same kind of approval that Sale enjoyed when, on Thursday night, their members gave unanimous support for an investment package worth a minimum £2.5 million. Sale propose a limited company that would buy the rugby-playing activities and lease amenities from the club itself, keeping rugby at the Heywood Road ground.

The Gloucester supporters, though, have a reputation for speaking their mind and *Shedhead*, their excellent fanzine, has already expressed a view: "Any buyer will soon find out that he is responsible for a hell of a lot more than some grass, a dozen or so hostility [sic] boxes, a few hundred seats and a rickety-looking old terrace — he will be the lucky owner of the hopes and dreams of thousands of people, not to mention the spirits of more people than you could count which can no longer make themselves heard," the fanzine's authors, Ed Snow and Bob Fenton, wrote.

Gloucester's ideal would be to have a locally-based company as an investor, which could use the club's name in a branding exercise. In the meantime Mike Lloyd returns to the Gloucester wing against a Sale side reinforced by Charlie Vyvyan at No 8.

Ebbw Vale having serious fun

By David Hands

IF THIS is the season for unfashionable teams, as Gloucester and Sale in England suggest it is, then Ebbw Vale will win the Swalec Cup semi-final against Swansea at Cardiff today.

If, however, recent league form means anything, then Swansea will have in mind their 59-12 dismissal of the Gwent club last weekend and can make preparations for a final against the winners of the match tomorrow between Cardiff and Llanelli.

But Ebbw Vale are at strength this weekend and will remember their home league win over Swansea, by 13-9. "For us, it will be a fun day out," Kingsley Jones, the Ebbw Vale captain, said in the knowledge that his club has not been in this position since 1977. "But, when that first whistle blows, everything becomes deadly serious."

Swansea hope to have Scott Gibbs available, after the Wales centre's recovery from a neck injury, but are without Colin Charvis and Arwel Thomas. They remain in contention for cup and league, in which Dunvant's match with Caerphilly will be critical now that the bottom four clubs will be relegated. Dunvant are ninth, but only two points behind Neath, the league champions last season.

Two Scotland internationals, Rob Wainwright and Matt Stewart, play for the Army against the Royal Navy in the opening match of the Inter-Services Championship at Twickenham today. There was a three-way tie for the Willis Corroon trophy a year ago and the Army hope the understanding between their four Newbury players, three from Camberley and three from Leeds will tilt the balance their way.

The England senior schools team can win a junior grand slam if they beat a Wales 18-group XV at Narberth, a distinction that would send them on their way to tour Australia in July rejoicing. England's Colts also play the Welsh, at Iffley Road, Oxford.

EQUESTRIANISM

Mathy cuts corners to outpace Britons

From Jenny MacArthur
in 's-Hertogenbosch

FRANCOIS MATHY, of Belgium, riding Shurlands Governor, surprised his more experienced rivals by winning the Rabobank Prize, the opening international class at the three-day Volvo World Cup meeting here, by a margin of 1.34sec.

Mathy, whose father was a member of Belgium's bronze medal-winning team at the 1976 Montreal Olympics, has been riding with increasing confidence since winning the Brussels Grand Prix on Shurlands Governor last November. He wasted no time around the inviting 12-fence course yesterday, taking every possible short cut to finish in 46.39sec.

John Whitaker, who held the lead early on after a stylish performance on the Dutch-bred Virtual Village Heyman, finished third. He is convinced that the eight-year-old stallion, bought from Jan Tops a year ago, will soon be ready to tackle his first grand prix.

Michael Whitaker had a less rewarding time on Absolom, also Dutch-bred, who incurred 14.25 faults. Nick Skelton, on Zalza, and Geoff Billington, on It's Otto, both used the class as "a school" and incurred time faults. Robert Smith, in contrast, meant business from the start on Orthos but unluckily clipped the seventh fence.

British riders are hoping for a change of luck in the World Cup qualifier tomorrow in which Smith and Skelton, who lie nineteenth and 26th in the European League, from which the top 18 are eligible for the final, have their last chance to advance.

Holland's popular Anky van Grunsven, riding her Olympic silver medal-winner, Gestion Bonfire, has built up a commanding lead in the Volvo dressage World Cup, in which she is attempting a third successive win.

Van Grunsven, who won the Dortmund qualifier last month — her only competition with Bonfire since Atlanta — won the opening grand prix by a 55-point margin from her main rival, Sven Rothenberger.

Richard Davison, Britain's only qualifier, who finished thirteenth (out of 14) after a disappointing test on Hiscox Askari, is hoping to compensate with a good performance in the freestyle-to-music competition today, the final part of the World Cup.

IN BRIEF

MacKenzie leads in practice

NIALL MacKENZIE made an inspired start to his defence of the British Superbike crown by leading in practice at Donington Park yesterday, ahead of the double race tomorrow. The Scottish racer, 35, has the benefit of an upgraded Yamaha for the 22-race championship that has attracted five leading factory teams, with four former champions lining up on the grid.

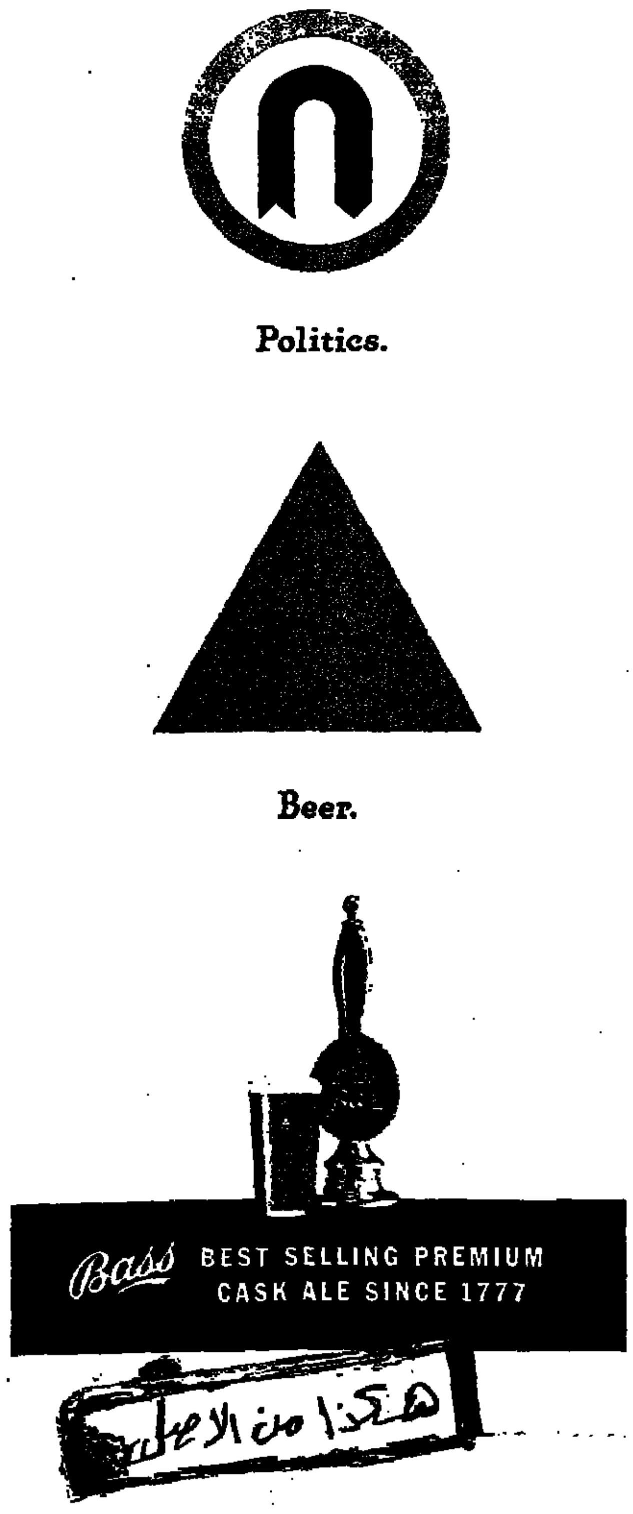
The former champion, John Reynolds, riding the Reve Red Bull Ducati, closed within four hundredths of a second of MacKenzie, while Terry Rymer, of Kawasaki, was marginally slower.

☐ Seven riders, including the world champion, Michael Doohan, of Australia, broke Shah Alam course records yesterday during practice for the Malaysia Grand Prix motorcycle race.

Ice hockey: The Great Britain head coach, Peter Woods, was in optimistic mood as he and his team embarked on the final leg of their journey to Poland for pool B of the world championships, which begin today. The team's preparations included one full-scale game, a 3-3 draw against Austria in Linz last weekend.

Golf: The second day of competition at the 66th Halford Hewitt Foursomes saw the two teams many expect to contest the final tomorrow progressing into the third round with relative ease. Harrow recorded a 4-1 win over Berkhamsted at Sandwich and Radley also had little trouble in their second-round match with Canford at Deal.

Cricket: The England and Wales Cricket Board appointed Michael Browning to take on the job of event manager for the 1999 World Cup yesterday.



Politics.

Beer.

Bass BEST SELLING PREMIUM CASK ALE SINCE 1777

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MOTOR RACING: WORLD CHAMPION PREPARES TO PUSH HIMSELF TO LIMIT TO CHALLENGE LEADING DRIVERS

Hill waiting to move out of the slipstream

FROM MICHAEL CALVIN IN BUENOS AIRES

IT WAS business as usual at the Autodromo Oscar A Galvez here yesterday. Drivers whinged, engines whined and everyone worried about money. Few took notice of the earnest young man emerging from the Arrows garage.

There were times last year when Damon Hill craved such relative anonymity. He estimates that he signed 20,000 autographs during the course of winning the world drivers' championship that established him as a fixture on the celebrity circuit. In Formula One, however, he was dismissed as an also-ran, even before he had left Buckingham Palace after being appointed OBE. Relegation to the ranks has freed him from the febrile atmosphere that once dominated his working life.

The cognoscenti continue to court Jacques Villenueve, who predictably set the pace for the Argentine Grand Prix tomorrow. Only Rubens Barrichello, in a surprisingly nimble Stewart-Ford, got within a second of him in the free practice yesterday. The media scrum still surged around Michael Schumacher, fifth fastest in his Ferrari, and Heinz-Harald Frentzen, who was further undermined by his seventh place, 1.4sec adrift of Villeneuve, his Williams teammate.

Hill, quietly, diligently, got on with his rehabilitation. Since his morning was wasted by technical problems that required the rear of his car to be rebuilt, the thirteenth quickest time, 3.1sec behind Villenueve, was a small triumph. "You only really notice the difference in attitudes when you step out of the car," Hill said. "I'm used to so much going on around me, but now that's all going on at the other end of the pit lane. I don't envy them, as such. I can live without the fuss, but I don't want to think I will never experience it again. The front is the only place to be."

Hill is unworried by slights, real or imagined, because he understands the insular nature of his sport. It is cyclical in character, despite its emotional intensity. "It is such a small world, for such a major sport," he said. "It's pointless hearing grudges because, sooner or later, you are going to have to swallow your pride and talk business with someone you don't particularly like.

"Nowhere else in sport does that happen quite as regularly, as it does in Formula One. People are worst enemies one week and jumping into bed with each other the next. Everyone is focusing on Frentzen at the moment, but he's got 15 races to sort things out and, if he's got half a brain, he will pull through his problems.

"The buzz, for me, comes from sorting out the car. When you're in complete control you're in touch with so many sensations. You're feeling them through the seat of your pants, through the steering wheel, through the pedal. I'm just trying to get those vibes again."

His performance in Brazil, which was curtailed by an engine fire after he had run as high as fourth, renewed his credibility. Rumours are already circulating that Benetton cherish his technical nous and his understated ambition.

Hill's immediate horizons are, by necessity, more limited. The qualifying session today, on the tight, twisty circuit condemned as a "glorified go-kart track" by Villeneuve, is another important test of potential. "We're holding our breath here," Hill said. "We are entering a much more difficult phase and we don't want to lose our momentum. I'm going to have to wring that last percentage point out of the car. It's a bit like squeezing a sponge. You can get the majority of water out quite quickly, but then you have to apply a lot of pressure for relatively little reward. In purely driving terms, I'm enjoying this season as much as ever. I'm actually going as fast as I was in a Williams last season but, because of the improvement in the tyres, everyone on the grid is quicker.

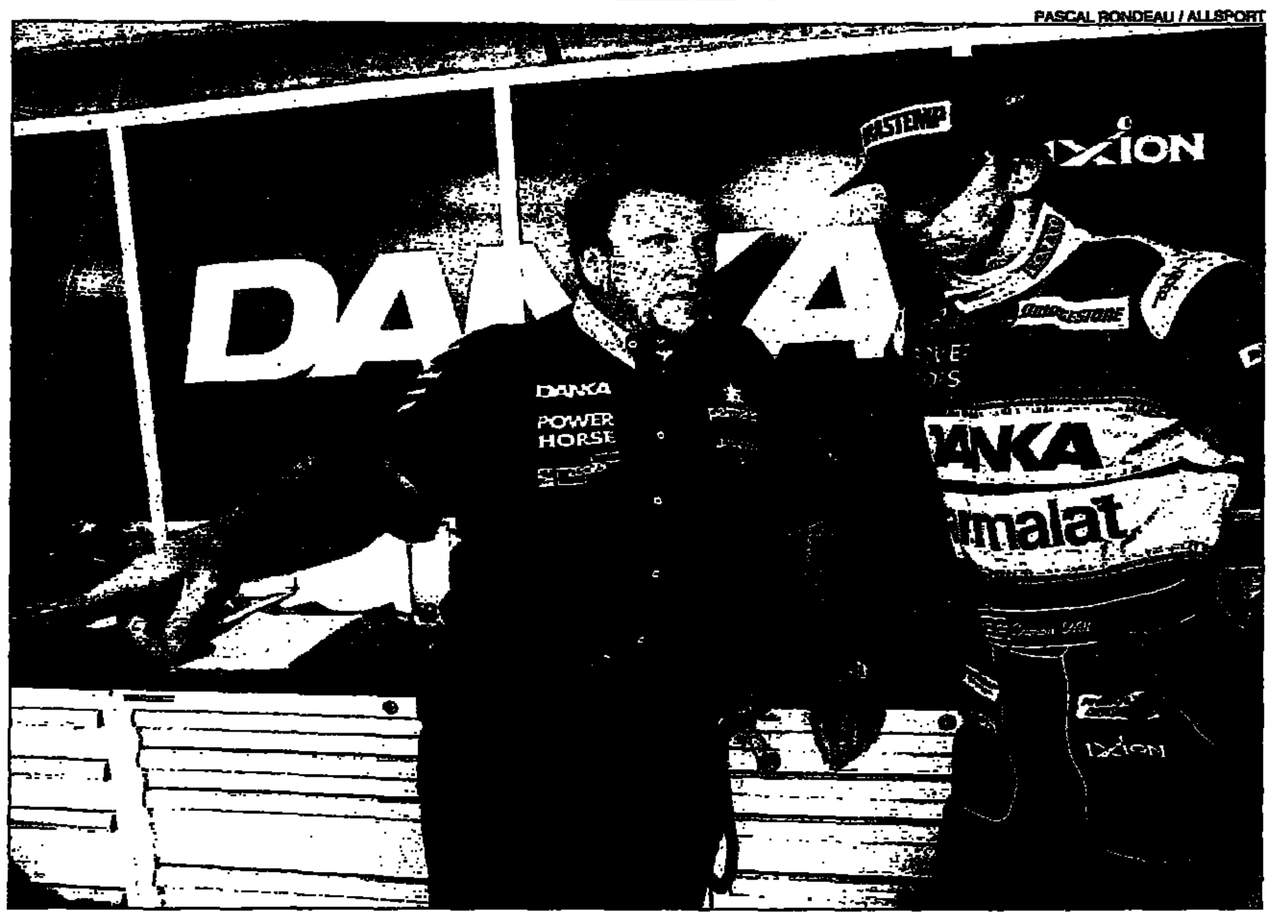
"The lap times here are incredible. We're around four seconds quicker than last year, which is astonishing. I reckon in qualifying we could be 2½ seconds off the pace and that might just be enough to get into the top ten. I have to push, push, push. It's the competition with yourself that matters and the inner satisfaction of being world champion has not diluted yet."

Hill is, though, ready to use his status to speak out. He remains unimpressed by Villeneuve's ostentatious campaign for circuits to be redesigned so that he can live closer to the edge. "I spent a season with Jacques and I learnt that his concept of what can happen in a racing car is slightly adrift of reality. I understand the sheer physics of an accident.

"You don't walk away from a 150mph shunt with just a bump on the head. I don't want to see him get hurt. I don't want to see anyone in hospital. OK, so this circuit has not got the thrill factor that people want, but it is not impossible to remove the element of danger from the sport.

"Formula One left me with a nasty taste in my mouth at an early age. I can remember my dad coming home and the look on his face because one of his friends had been killed. I grew up with that, and I won't forget it."

PASCAL RONDEAU / ALLSPORT



Tom Walkinshaw, the Arrows team manager, makes a point to his driver, Hill, during practice yesterday

DETAILS FROM BUENOS AIRES

PRACTICE TIMES: 1, J Villeneuve (Can, Williams) 1min 25.755sec; 2, R Barrichello (Br, Stewart) 1:26.693; 3, O Panis (Fr, Prost) 1:26.983; 4, G Berger (Austria, Benetton) 1:27.017; 5, M Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1:27.052; 6, G Fisichella (It, Jordan) 1:27.129; 7, H-H Frentzen (Ger, Williams) 1:27.169; 8, J Herbert (GB, Sauber) 1:27.702; 9, R Schumacher (Ger, Jordan) 1:27.823; 10, J Alesi (Fr, Benetton) 1:27.979; 11, E Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1:28.137; 12, D Coulthard (GB, McLaren) 1:28.163; 13, D Hill (GB, Arrows) 1:28.932; 14, N Larini (It, Sauber) 1:29.153; 15, J Verstappen (Holl, Tyrrell) 1:29.302; 16, M Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren) 1:29.426; 17, M Salo (Fin, Tyrrell) 1:29.893; 18, S Nakano (Japan, Prost) 1:30.069; 19, J Magnussen (Den, Stewart) 1:30.376; 20, U Katayama (Japan, Minardi) 1:30.546; 21, P Diniz (Br, Arrows) 1:30.727; 22, J Trulli (It, Minardi) 1:31.269.

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS: Drivers: 1 equal, Coulthard and Villeneuve 10pts; 3, Berger 9; 4, M Schumacher 8; 5, Hakkinen 7; 6, Panis 6; 7 equal, Larini and Alesi 1. Constructors: 1, McLaren-Mercedes 17pts; 2 equal, Williams-Renault and Benetton-Renault 10; 4, Ferrari 8; 5, Prost Mugen-Honda 6; 6, Sauber 1.

GRANDS PRIX TO COME: Tomorrow: Argentinian (Buenos Aires). Apr 27: San Marino (Imola). May 11: Monaco (Monte Carlo). May 25: Spanish (Barcelona). Jun 15: Canadian (Montreal). Jun 29: French (Magny-Cours). Jul 13: British (Silverstone). Jul 27: German (Hockenheim). Aug 10: Hungarian (Hungaroring). Aug 24: Belgian (Spa-Francorchamps). Sep 7: Italian (Monza). Sep 21: Austrian (A-1 Ring). Sep 28: Luxembourg (Nürburgring). Oct 12: Japanese (Suzuka). Oct 26: Portuguese (Estoril).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Castleford seek £12m new home

Christopher Irvine looks at a troubled club that boasts lofty ambitions

IT IS ironic that in troubled times on the field, Castleford Tigers, the club that has traditionally dragged its feet off the field, should be looking ambitiously to the future with plans to create a new £12 million 15,000-seat stadium.

An out-of-town site, at Whitwood, close to the M62 motorway, has been earmarked for the development of a multi-use stadium and leisure complex, complete with an indoor ski village. Relegation by Castleford from the Stones Super League would hardly appeal to potential investors, although a London-based property developer has expressed interest in funding the proposed "Snowdome".

The club has commissioned a leisure consultant to check the viability of the scheme and will approach Wakefield Council for funding for the 70-acre site before putting the proposals, that would involve selling their Wheldon Road ground, to a public meeting next month.

Castleford's hopes of winning backing from the local authority and the National Lottery are complicated by the support that Wakefield Council has given to the building of the new £50 million headquarters of Yorkshire County Cricket Club and adjoining joint-use stadium for Wakefield Trinity rugby league and Wakefield rugby union clubs, at Durkar, off the M1 motorway.

For seven decades, Castleford have been making life generally inhospitable for visiting teams to Wheldon Road, which looks like it should have been condemned years ago. There have been a few recent improvements including a roof, a coat of paint for the toilets, an upgraded press box and new seats in the main wooden stand.

It has not changed so much that Darryl Van de Velde will not recognise the place. The Australian was in charge at Castleford for five seasons, until May 1993, and is ten days into the coaching job at Warrington Wolves, the visitors tomorrow, who have lost nine of the past ten matches against the Yorkshire side.

At Castelford, Van de Velde groomed John Joyner, his assistant, who guided the team to the Regal Trophy in 1994. Joyner last week paid the price for a poor start to the season and ended a 25-year association with the club as a player and coach. Mick Morgan, the commercial manager, has stepped in on a temporary basis, but Castleford's losing run continued last Sunday at Sheffield Eagles.

Lee Crooks, who has confirmed that he is in the running for the coaching vacancy, is missing from Castleford's front row because of a knee injury and Dean Sampson takes his place. Nathan Sykes also returns at prop.

Warrington, who began the season with a whimper, and reignited it with a bang by beating Wigan Warriors, and Oldham Bears at home, move Kelly Shelford to scrum half for Jon Duffy who is out for at least six weeks after he sustained a leg fracture. Chris Rudd is switched to full back as Lee Penny has a knee injury and Toa Kohe-Love returns at centre after missing the two recent victories.

Before the visit last night of Bradford Bulls, Wigan signed Lee Hansen, the Tonga prop, from Widnes, who have taken Sean Long and Matthew Knowles in exchange. Widnes, who are struggling three places off the bottom of the first division, also acquired Nick Devine, as a front row replacement for Hansen, on a month-loan from St Helens.

Oldham, the only other side without a win, have Rob Myler, David Bradbury and Matt Munro returning from injury for the visit tomorrow night of Paris Saint-Germain, who have no choice but to turn to more French players with a number of long-term injuries among their mainly-Australian squad.

Wayne Jackson takes the place of the injured Kelvin Skerrett for Halifax Blue Sox tomorrow against London Broncos, who are to overcome the problem of choosing between Shaun Edwards and Josh White at scrum half by playing them both at half back, with Adrian Spencer dropping to the bench.

In a series of disciplinary verdicts the Rugby Football League gave three-match bans each to Stuart Rhodes, of Carlisle, for use of the elbow, and Jason Gatus, of York, for punching. Craig Booth, of Hunslet, was suspended for one match for a high tackle.

HOCKEY

Reading awaiting backlash

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

THE Hockey Association Cup quarter-final between Old Loughtonians and Reading at Chigwell today is a rerun of the final last year at Milton Keynes, where Reading won on penalty strokes after the teams had finished extra time still level at 2-2.

Loughtonians, who lost that penalty shoot-out 3-2, will be without Julian Halls, a stalwart defender, who is still under treatment for an injured wrist, while Nick Thompson's knee trouble will restrict his activities to the set-pieces only. Jason Lee, one of their forwards, is in Australia.

Confidence is high, however, even though they languish in eighth position in the premier division of the National League, of which Reading became the champions last week. The clubs have each won one of their two previous meetings this season.

The pick of the quarter-finals tomorrow is the one between Cannock and Teddington, whose 5-4 win at Cannock last month ended the championship hopes of their hosts Another battle royal is in prospect.

Guildford will visit Surbiton lacking the services of Brett Garrard, who has not been fit since his return from Pakistan with the England team.

In the remaining match, St Albans entertain Chelmsford, the only non-league club left in the competition. Chelmsford, a much improved side, will be fighting for a place in the National League when the inter-league play-offs start at Milton Keynes on April 25.

BOWLS

Springell wins with Grace

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

GRACE has been a name to conjure with in English bowls since Dr W. G. of that ilk, the cricket legend, formed the English Bowling Association in 1903 and pioneered the concept of the indoor game.

Yesterday Gary Grace added his name to the sport's roll of honour when he skipped his Handy Cross, High Wycombe, club colleague, Alan Springell, to victory in the final of the national indoor pairs championship at Melton Mowbray.

Springell, 58, and Grace, who is 30 years younger, took control from the start, opening up a 13-3 lead after 12 ends and cruising to a 20-6 win over Ron Ayres and Mark Yelland, of Watford.

Tony Allcock suffered a first-round defeat at the hands of Brett Morley, of Nottingham, when the singles championship got under way. Morley took an early lead, but Allcock had levelled the scores at 7-7 by the ninth end. The next eight ends belonged to Morley and a brief Allcock rally was cut short when Morley scored a match-winning double on the twentieth end to win 21-13.

John Ottaway, from Wymondham Dell, Norfolk, the runner-up at Melton last year, also went out, losing his second-round encounter with David Holt, of Blackpool Borough, 21-14.

Six of the eight quarter-finalists — Morley, Holt, Robert Newman, John Leeman, Paul Butcher and David Ward — were in the England team that won the Hilton Trophy in Ireland last month.

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Florida 1 Chicago Cubs 0; Houston 5 Atlanta 3. Postponed: St Louis v Montreal; Colorado v Cincinnati.
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Minnesota 7 Detroit 3, Toronto 4 Chicago White Sox 0; Texas 2 Milwaukee 0. Postponed: Kansas City v Baltimore.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Orlando 105 Toronto 69; Miami 93 Detroit 83; New Jersey 93 Milwaukee 88; Chicago 106 New York 103; Seattle 90 Dallas 82, Houston 102 Vancouver 94, Portland 98 San Antonio 81; Golden State 109 Denver 107 (OT), Minnesota 108 LA Clippers 96; Phoenix 101 Sacramento 99.

BOWLS

MELTON MOWBRAY: All England men's indoor championships: Singles: First round: L Gillett (Banbury Cross) bt M Royal (Mid Suffolk) 21-17, R Newman (Whiteknights) bt I Foster (Victory) 21-2: N Brignall (Richardsons) bt C Benham (Ilminster) 21-11; W Hobart (Boston) bt K Wood (Margate) 21-10, C Jackson (Church Gresley) bt G Sampson (Coventry) 21-13; J Kelly (Plymouth CS) bt N Rees (Wellingborough) 21-12; P Butcher (Cyphers) bt R Hudson (Ilford) 21-20, C Wright (Gullivers) bt P Vernvacopoulos (Wey Valley) 21-13.

BOXING

LAS VEGAS: Welterweight: Emmett Linton (US) bt Don Curry (US), technical ko 7th. Light-heavyweight: Donny Lalonde (US) bt Joe Stevenson (US), technical ko 7th

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Buffalo 5 Boston 1, NY Rangers 6 Philadelphia 3, Tampa Bay 4 Pittsburgh 3; Washington 3 Montreal 2; St Louis 5 Toronto 1.

CRICKET

One-day international match

South Africa v Australia

CENTURION (South Africa won toss): Australia beat South Africa by five wickets

SOUTH AFRICA

A M Bacher b Dale	15
H H Gibbs c Healy b Gillespie	33
*W J Cronje run out	80
D J Cullinan c M E Waugh b Warne	89
J H Kallis st Healy b Warne	3
J N Rhodes run out	10
S M Pollock c Dale b Bichel	33
D N Crookes not out	4
†D J Richardson not out	0
Extras (lb 12, w 4, nb 1)	17
Total (7 wkts, 50 overs)	284

R E Bryson and A A Donald did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-52, 2-77, 3-226, 4-232, 5-232, 6-261, 7-283

BOWLING: Dale 10-0-44-1, Bichel 9-0-50-1; Warne 10-1-52-2; Gillespie 9-0-45-1, Blewett 5-0-41-0; Bevan 7-0-40-0

AUSTRALIA

M E Waugh c Rhodes b Pollock	0
G S Blewett c Crookes b Pollock	21
S G Law b Cronje	31
S R Waugh lbw b Pollock	89
M G Bevan lbw b Bryson	103
A C Gilchrist not out	20
*†I A Healy not out	9
Extras (lb 5, w 7, nb 2)	14
Total (5 wkts, 49 overs)	287

S K Warne, A C Dale, A J Bichel and J N Gillespie did not bat

FALL OF WICKETS 1-0, 2-36, 3-58, 4-247, 5-282

BOWLING: Pollock 10-0-40-3; Bryson 10-0-83-1; Donald 10-1-59-0, Cronje 7-0-46-1; Crookes 6-0-37-0; Kallis 6-0-37-0

Umpires: D F Becker and S B Lambson

Sharjah Cup final

Pakistan v Sri Lanka

SHARJAH (Pakistan won toss): Sri Lanka beat Pakistan by four wickets

PAKISTAN

Ramiz Raja c Ranatunga b S C de Silva	12
Sajid Ali c Tillekeratne b Muralitharan	28
Ijaz Ahmed b Jayasuriya	33
Salim Malik b Muralitharan	58
Inzamam-ul Haq run out	61
†Moin Khan c Mahanama b Muralitharan	1
*Wasim Akram b Dharmasena	3
Shahid Afridi b Vaas	8
Waqar Younis c P A de Silva b Vaas	1
Saqlain Mushtaq c Mahanama b S C de Silva	1
Mushtaq Ahmed not out	0
Extras (b 1, lb 1, w 5, nb 1)	8
Total (49.2 overs)	214

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-19, 2-68, 3-87, 4-185, 5-187, 6-195, 7-208, 8-210, 9-212

BOWLING: Vaas 9.2-1-32-2; S C de Silva 9-0-35-2; Muralitharan 10-0-42-3, Dharmasena 9-1-30-1; Jayasuriya 5-0-31-1, P A de Silva 7-0-42-0

SRI LANKA

S T Jayasuriya lbw b Waqar	13
†R S Kaluwitharana c Ijaz b Wasim	0
M S Atapattu lbw b Mushtaq Ahmed	29
P A de Silva not out	87
*A Ranatunga c and b Salim	28
R S Mahanama c Mushtaq Ahmed b Saqlain Mushtaq	31
H P Tillekeratne c Ijaz b Saqlain Mushtaq	7
H D P K Dharmasena not out	3
Extras (lb 11, w 2, nb 4)	17
Total (6 wkts, 49.2 overs)	215

W P U J C Vaas, M Muralitharan and S C de Silva did not bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-1, 2-35, 3-67, 4-133, 5-193, 6-204

BOWLING: Wasim Akram 10-1-30-1, Waqar Younis 8-0-43-1; Saqlain Mushtaq 9.2-0-41-2; Mushtaq Ahmed 10-0-41-1 Shahid Afridi 5-0-24-0; Salim Malik 7-0-25-1

Man of the match and series: P A de Silva

Umpires: C J Mitchley (South Africa) and S B Dunne (New Zealand)

ICC Trophy

Third-place play-off

Ireland v Scotland

KUALA LUMPUR (Ireland won toss): Scotland beat Ireland on higher run rate

SCOTLAND

I L Philip c Doak b McCrum	11
D R Lockhart c Benson b Doak	21
M J Smith run out	49
*G Salmond c A D Patterson b Curry	7
J G Williamson b M W Patterson	27
M J D Allingham run out	22
†A G Davies b Heasley	17
I R Beven c A D Patterson b M W Patterson	3
S R Kennedy not out	4
Extras (lb 4, w 22)	26
Total (8 wkts, 45 overs)	187

K Thomson and K L P Sheridan did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-19, 2-75, 3-94, 4-108, 5-159, 6-167, 7-177, 8-187.

BOWLING: Gillespie 5-1-10-0; McCrum 7-1-14-1; Heasley 8-0-44-1; M W Patterson 8-0-42-2, Harrison 8-0-34-0, Doak 6-0-28-1; Curry 3-0-11-1

IRELAND

D J Curry c Salmond b Thompson	7
†A D Patterson c Davies b Thompson	6
D A Lewis c Thompson b Allingham	11
*J D R Benson c Davies b Sheridan	28
N G Doak c Thompson b Sheridan	7
A R Dunlop c Salmond b Sheridan	10
D Heasley c Lockhard b Sheridan	18
P G Gillespie c Davies b Beven	9
G D Harrison c Lockhard b Williamson	16
M W Patterson c Kennedy b Williamson	6
P McCrum not out	2
Extras (b 1, lb 1, w 15, nb 6)	23
Total (39 overs)	141

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-9, 2-20, 3-46, 4-72, 5-81, 6-88, 7-111, 8-125, 9-137

BOWLING: Beven 9-0-27-1, Thompson 6-1-33-2, Kennedy 9-3-14-0; Allingham 3-0-22-1 Sheridan 9-1-24-4; Williamson 3-0-19-2

Umpires: D G Hair (Australia) and S Venkataraghavan (India)

RED STRIPE CUP (first day of four): Discovery Bay, Jamaica: Windward Islands 117 (L R Williams 6-26); Jamaica 140-3 (R G Samuels 65 not out). Basseterre, St Kitts: Barbados 206-7 (R I C Holder 69 not out, F L Reifer 61) v Leeward Islands.

EQUESTRIANISM

'S-HERTOGENBOSCH: Rabobank Prize: 1, Shurlands Goernor (F Mathy, Bel) 0 in 46.39; 2, Hans (H van de Pol, Holl) 0 in 47.73; 3, Virtual Village Heyman (J Whitaker, GB) 0 in 47.93. Volvo World Cup dressage grand prix: 1, Gestion Bonfire (A van Grunsven, Holl) 1,847pts, 2, Jonggor's Weyden (S Rothenberger, Holl) 1,792; 3, Walk on Top (L Nathhorst, Swe) 1,754. British: 13, Hiscox Askari (R Davison) 1,550.

FOOTBALL

EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' CUP: Semi-finals, first leg: Barcelona 1 Fiorentina 1; Paris Saint-Germain 3 Liverpool 0.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Tranmere 0 Stoke 2. Second division: Corrected result: Stockport 0 Barnsley 4
FA YOUTH CUP: Semi-final, first leg: Crystal Palace 2 Blackburn 1
UNIBOND LEAGUE: First division: Farsley Celtic 0 Leigh 0. Unifilla Cup: Second-round replay: Stocksbridge PS 0 Ashton 3
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Salisbury 2 Sudbury 1.
ICIS LEAGUE: Second division: Banstead 1 Wembley 0; Dorking 0 Leatherhead 3; Egham 1 Ware 0
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Deal 2 Chatham 2
ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: West Midland Fire Service 3 Kings Heath 2
JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Felixstowe P and T 3 Walton 1
SCHOOLS MATCH: Victory Shield Under-15 international: Scotland 1 Northern Ireland 0 (at Stirling)
WORLD CUP: Asian qualifying zone: Group three: Bahrain 1 United Arab Emirates 2 (in Manama)

GOLF

HALFORD HEWITT FOURSOMES: First round: At Deal: Watsons bt Fettes 4½-½; Merchiston bt Wellington 3½-1½, Whitgift bt St Bees 3-2; Epsom bt Loretto 3½-1½; Bradfield bt Trent 3-2; Repton bt Lancing 3½-1½; Radley bt City of London 4-1; Canford bt Chigwell 3½-1½, Rossall bt Eton 3½-1½; Uppingham bt Cheltenham 4-1; Sherborne bt Wellingborough 3½-1½; Forest bt Highgate 3½-1½; Taunton bt St Paul's 3½-1½, Eastbourne bt Gresham's 3-2. At Sandwich: Berkhamsted bt Aldenham 4-1; Harrow bt Bishop's Stortford 5-0; Cranleigh wo Wrekin; Downside bt Ampleforth 3-2; Edinburgh bt Framlingham 5-0, Shrewsbury bt Felsted 3-2; Blundell's bt King Edward's, Birmingham 5-0; Charterhouse bt Hurstpierpoint 5-0, Malvern bt The Leys 4-1; Tonbridge bt Merchant Taylors' 3-2.

RACKETS

QUEEN'S CLUB: Lacoste Open doubles: First round: R Carter and C Robards bt D Jenkins and R Wakely 16-14, 6-15, 15-6, 16-13, 15-12; H Angus and N Bailey bt D Johnson and A Lyons 15-8, 15-3, 10-15, 15-5, 15-8. Quarter-finals: T Cockroft and R Owen-Browne bt R Newman and G Rees 15-8, 16-14, 10-15, 15-2, 15-12; D Makey and T Sawrey-Cookson bt Carter and Robards 15-4, 4-15, 15-3, 18-17, 15-16, 15-6; W Boone and P Brake bt Angus and Bailey 15-1, 15-5, 18-16, 15-10.

RUGBY UNION

Super 12 tournament

Waikato 15 Natal 33

Waikato Chiefs: Tries: Osborne, Taylor. Con: Feeney. Pens: Feeney. Natal Sharks: Tries: Garvey 2, C van der Westhuizen. Cons: Lawless 3. Pens: Lawless 4
(at Albany Stadium, Auckland)

ENGLAND TOUR TO ARGENTINA: May: 21: v Córdoba (Córdoba): 24: v Buenos Aires Selection (BA Cricket and Rugby Club): 27; v Argentina A (BA Cricket and Rugby Club): 31: v Argentina (Ferrocarril Oeste, Buenos Aires). June: 3: v Cuyo (Mendoza); 7: v Argentina (Ferrocarril Oeste)

RUGBY LEAGUE

ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: Hull 42 Oldham 18; Salford 32 Featherstone 26, Castleford 30 Bradford 10
AUSTRALIAN SUPER LEAGUE: New South Wales 38 Queensland 10.
AUSTRALIAN LEAGUE (ARL): Western Suburbs 4 Newcastle Knights 8.

SPEEDWAY

SPEEDWAY STAR CUP: Ipswich 41 Poole 49.
PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Sheffield 55 Glasgow 35

SWIMMING

SHEFFIELD: European championship trials: Men: 200m freestyle: 1, P Palmer (Bath) 1min 49.85sec; 2, J Salter (Edinburgh) 1:50.54; 3, A Clayton (Leeds) 1:50.76. 100m breaststroke: 1, R Maden (Rochdale) 1:02.73; 2, A Ayres (Swansea) 1:03.38, 3, D Mew (Isle of Wight) 1.04.13. 100m butterfly: 1, S Parry (Liverpool) 54.03; 2, J Hickman (Stockport) 54.46; 3, M Watkins (Torfaen) 55.97. Women: 100m freestyle: 1, S Rolph (Newcastle) 56.24; 2, K Pickering (Ipswich) 56.71; 3, C Huddart (Leeds) 56.81. 200m breaststroke: 1, J King (Bath) 2:33.69; 2, L Hindmarsh (Leeds) 2:35.99; 3, H Earp (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 2:36.19. 400m medley: 1, S Nesbit (Portsmouth) 4:54.23; 2, J Swallow (Killerwhales) 4:54.93; 3, R Comer (Wigan) 4.58.45

TENNIS

HONG KONG: Men's tournament: Second round: M Chang (US) bt J Tarango (US) 6-4, 4-6, 6-1, T Johansson (Swe) bt J Grabb (US) 6-1, 6-2; J Gimelstob (US) bt N Godwin (SA) 7-5, 6-4; P Rafter (Aus) bt C Amiens (Ger) 4-6, 7-6, 6-3; S Lareau (Can) bt D Vacek (Cz) 6-1, 7-6; B MacPhie (US) bt M Rossel (Switz) 7-6, 6-2. Quarter-finals: Johansson bt Gimelstob 6-4, 6-4; Rafter bt T Woodbridge (Aus) 6-3, 6-1, Chang bt D Prinosil (Ger) 6-1, 7-6; MacPhie bt Lareau 6-3, 6-3.

ESTORIL: Men's tournament: Quarter-finals: J Sánchez (Sp) bt G Schaller (Austria) 6-0, 4-1 ret; A Corretja (Sp) bt F Santoro (Fr) 6-3, 4-0; F Clavet (Sp) bt C Moyá (Sp) 6-1, 6-3; F Mantilla (Sp) bt A Berasategui (Sp) 6-4, 6-1

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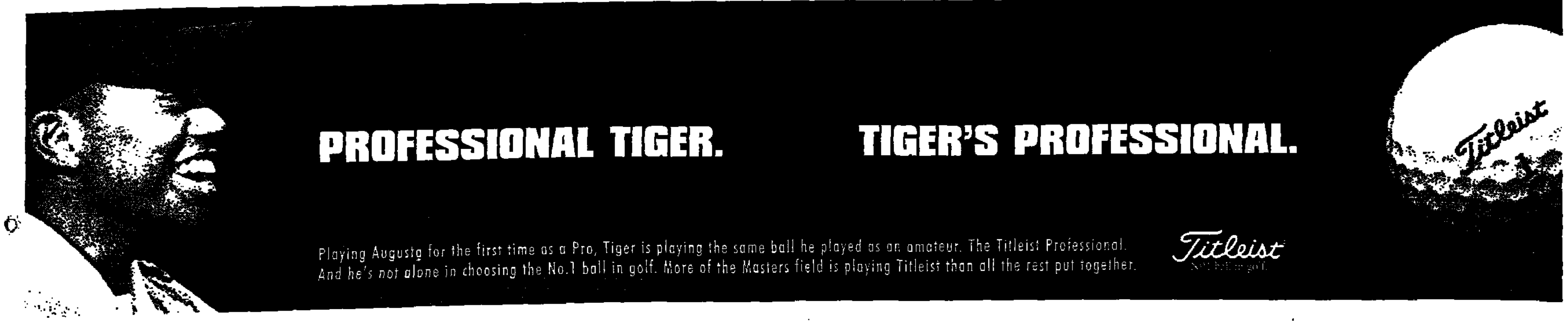

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ATHLETICS 47

McColgan to be put through her paces in London Marathon

SPORT

MOTOR RACING 51

Hill learning to steer a quiet course

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

Chelsea confidence a credit to Gullit's press-gang tactics

By Oliver Holt, football correspondent

HIS playing days are almost over but Ruud Gullit, the Chelsea manager, showed yesterday that his ability to turn football into performance art has not deserted him. For those who thought a kind of anarchy was settling over Stamford Bridge in the run-up to the FA Cup semi-final against Wimbledon at Highbury tomorrow, the Chelsea coach had all the answers. Never has "crisis, what crisis?" been paraphrased so elegantly and so bewitchingly.

Some had gone to Gullit's press conference in west London at lunchtime yesterday to bury him, not to praise him, to hear him try to explain away the outburst this week from Gianluca Vialli, his Italian striker, about how Gullit had "humiliated" him, and to delve deeper into the rumours of a dressing-room screaming match between groups of players in the wake of Chelsea's third successive defeat, at Coventry City on Wednesday.

For the first time since he arrived in England to be hailed as the kind of renaissance football player the domestic game had been searching for, to be acclaimed not just as a great talent but a great thinker and an articulate commentator, Gullit appeared to be on the brink of suffering his first bout of sustained criticism. People were even saying that he had grown jealous because Vialli merchandise was outselling his own in the club shop.

Gullit admitted that he had orchestrated it all. He was blatant about it. He said he had used the press just as the press had used him. As he laughingly thanked everybody for their co-operation in his psychological games, he got some laughs, too, from a room full of people not accustomed to doing managers favours.

His swingeing attack on the players after the 3-0 loss to Arsenal last Saturday morning was a ploy, according to Gullit, something he had picked up in his days at AC Milan and playing for the Dutch national team. Confrontation, he had learnt, could hurt a player's pride and elicit a reaction from him on the playing field that would not otherwise have been forthcoming.

Far from going into the semi-final in disarray, Gullit said, Chelsea were now raring to go. The matter with Vialli was settled, too. They had had a ten-minute chat after the Italian's comments and all their problems had been resolved. Vialli loved it at Chelsea, he added, and was keen to see out his contract. Things, in fact, could not be better.

"I think the arguing between the players was a very good sign, actually," Gullit said. "I have grown used to that sort of thing in Holland. Sometimes you try to get a confrontation, you try to get something out of the players. When Vialli came on as substitute against Coventry on Wednesday, he was different, he gave us a lot of spirit and I was really pleased with him.

"It happened with Dennis Wise, too, at the beginning when I took over. It is incredible how well he is playing this year. Some players will not respond to the confrontation, others will not. I have never seen Dennis playing so consistently and off the pitch, too, he is a different person.

"This mentality of responding to confrontation happened to me, too, when I was in Italy. Sometimes, there were writers who said 'Gullit is not what he used to be', so when I went on the pitch I made sure I performed so nobody would say that was true. Then, after a while, they were saying 'Gullit has knees of glass, he cannot play for more than two or three games at a time', so I went to Sampdoria and played week in, week out, and nothing happened.

"Perhaps this method has something to do with the Dutch mentality. When Holland were playing, there was always something happening in the Dutch camp. We searched for the confrontation to get players reacting and the good players got angry, their pride was hurt and they wanted to show everything they had. This is what has happened here, now. I did it all the time in the national team and Cruyff did it in his day too.

"I wanted Vialli to be hurt by what happened. He is OK now. We had a talk with each other and he said exactly what I wanted to hear. Of course, if he is not playing he is not going to be happy, but at least he knows exactly what I want. I have already seen things in him since our discussion that have pleased me as a coach. Sometimes you get compliments from the press and sometimes you get spanked but it is all part of the business."

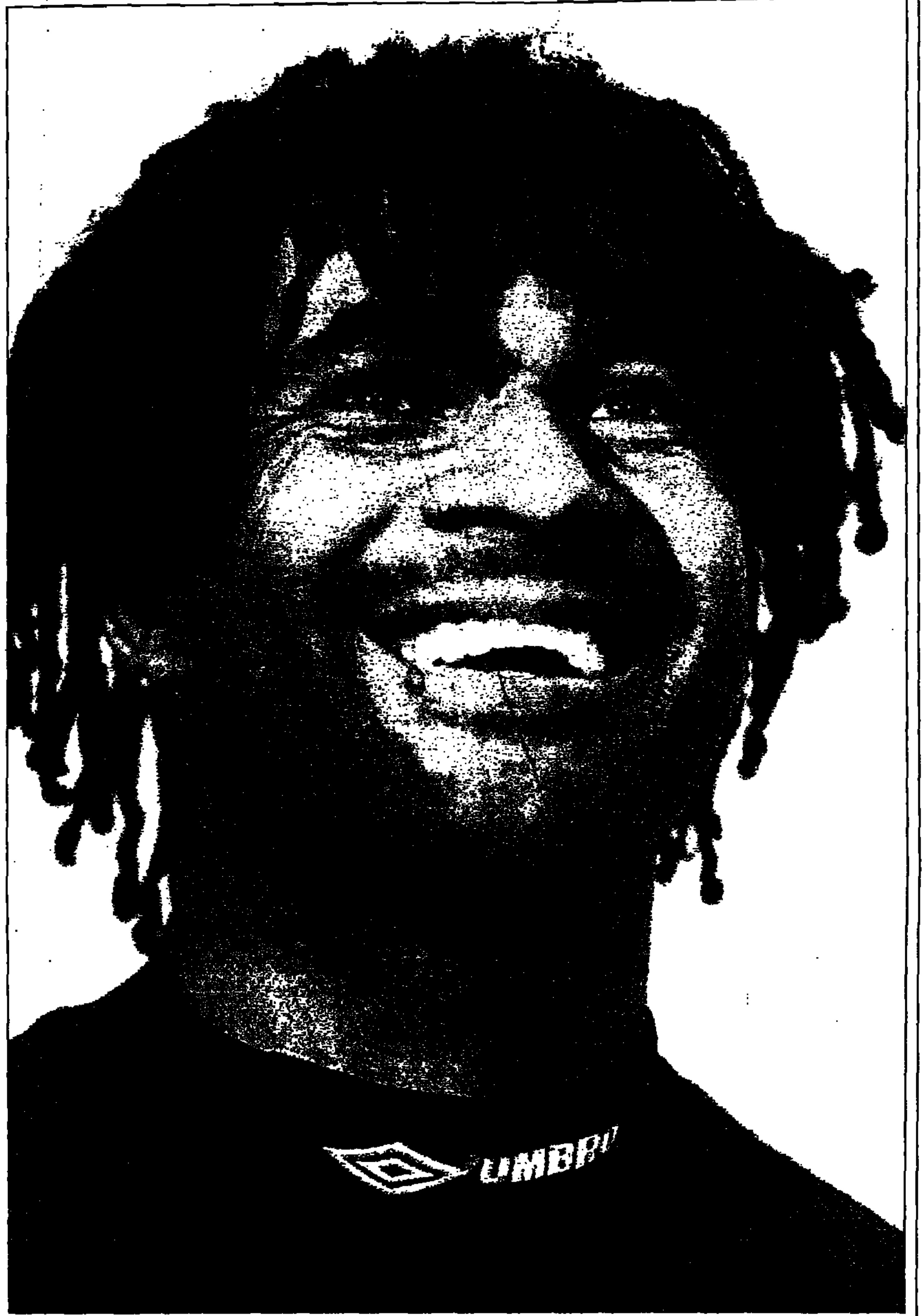
Gullit, though, has held back from taking the credit for the transformation that he is confident his team will show tomorrow afternoon. Much of the magic of the FA Cup has usually dissolved by this stage of the competition but the Dutchman said that he was astonished at the change the imminence of the match had wrought in his players.

"I saw a different team in training today," he said. "The change in them was incredible. In the last couple of weeks we were not tuned in enough because we were so focused on this game.

"The kind of attitude they had this morning has not been there for a long time. That is what I want for every game but maybe I demand too much. When I came here, because I wasn't born in England, I couldn't understand the obsession with the FA Cup, but gradually I am beginning to understand."

Chelsea go into the match against a Wimbledon team whose Premiership form has also dipped dramatically, with injury worries over Mark Hughes, who has a groin strain, Andy Myers and Eddie Newton. Newton, in particular, has his own ideas about who the public would like to see in the final.

"Chesterfield have done very well to get to the other semi-final against Middlesbrough" he said, "but I think the neutrals would rather there was a higher standard at Wembley. Chelsea against Middlesbrough or Wimbledon-Middlesbrough would be better. But I have to admit, I wouldn't say no to Chelsea-Chesterfield."



ROBIN MAYES

Gullit thanks Chelsea's critics in the media for inspiring his team during his bewitching performance yesterday

FA CUP

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Premiership guide 48

Unlucky 13th puts paid to Faldo's dream

From John Hopkins
Golf correspondent, in Augusta

NICK FALDO'S grip on the Masters title that he won so thrillingly last year ended on the 13th hole of his second round yesterday.

Faldo, who began eight strokes behind John Huston, had a shocking start and squandered four strokes in his first three holes. On the 13th, however, which he had played so beautifully in the fourth round last year — when he hit a two-iron that he described as one of the best strokes of his life — he ran up a nine, four over par.

This meant that he was 13 over par for 31 holes, and was certain to fail to advance to the last two rounds for the first time since he first played at Augusta in 1979.

In missing the cut, Faldo was joined by the man he had beaten so memorably last year. Greg Norman could do no better than a 74 for a 36-hole total of seven over par. Norman's woes were best demonstrated on the 15th, where he hit a ball into the water for the second successive day, and the 16th, where he again three-putted.

At the 1st, Faldo hit his second shot over the green and chipped back to ten feet. He took three putts to hole out. Further strokes were wasted on the 2nd, 3rd and 7th. It must have felt as if he was reliving the nightmare of the first round, when he three-putted five of his first nine holes before wrestling his play back under some kind of control to finish with a 75, three over par.

Putting was dominating the minds of all the players on the second day of the 61st Masters. After the difficulties of the first round, when a wind made the positioning of the flags so contentious, there had been a softening of attitude by club officials. The flags were more sympathetically positioned, the wind had dropped and the greens had been lightly watered to slow them down and make them a little less firm.

Consequently, the scoring was much lower. The outward nine, which the field had played in an average of nearly 39 strokes on Thursday, was merely difficult yesterday. Among those who broke par over its 3,465 yards were Tom Kite, Scott McCarron and John Morse, who were all out in 35. Warren Bladon, the Amateur champion, was out in 36.

Bladon has been one of the surprises so far. If it had not been for squandering three strokes on the 17th and 18th on Thursday, his 36-hole total of seven over par would have been much better. As it was, a 72 in his second round equalled the best score here by a British amateur and kept him in with a faint chance of becoming the first amateur from Britain to reach the last two rounds since Peter McEvoy in the late Seventies.

Bladon wore sunglasses for both rounds and was rarely without a smile. He was doing what everyone had told him to do, namely to enjoy himself and make the most of what would almost certainly be a unique experience.

"I was worried that I would make a fool of myself with a couple of bad scores," he said. "I have played two relaxing rounds, with Arnold Palmer and Ray Floyd. I played with Steve Jones [the US Open champion] and Jack Nicklaus in practice. It is nice here," he added, with a touch of British understatement.

Ian Woosnam, who had struck the ball so accurately on Thursday that he reached 16 greens in regulation figures, continued to hit the ball accurately. "I played really, really well," he said after a 68 that took him to one over par for 36 holes. "The course was easier today, much fairer."

There was little respite for Severiano Ballesteros. A 74 concealed some remarkably bad strokes and, at 11 over par, he missed the cut for the first time since 1984. "I had four bad holes yesterday and today nothing happened," Ballesteros said. "It is what has been happening to me all year."

Ballesteros: missed cut

He, though, was 21 strokes better than Arnold Palmer, who must now be considering his future at this event. He is not perceived in the same affectionate way as are his contemporaries, such as Gay Brewer and Billy Casper, who are both 65. To players and spectators alike, Palmer is not a 67-year-old man who once won the Masters. To them he remains the Tiger Woods of 40 years ago, the man who popularised golf.

Palmer was applauded every step of his second round and, as a mark of respect, his score was not put up on the scoreboard by the side of the 18th green. Just as well. At that moment he was 31 over par for 35 holes and he dropped another shot. No one among the crowds that come year after year wants to see him struggle. He looked desperately tired at the end of both his rounds and every footstep seemed to be an effort.

MASTERS LEADERBOARD

United States unless stated

EARLY SECOND-ROUND SCORES: 148: L Mize 79, 69 151: * W Bladon (GB) 79, 72 153: M McNulty (Zim) 81, 72. 154: R Floyd 79, 75 155: S Ballesteros (Sp) 81, 74. 156: M Bradley 79, 77. 158: T Boros 79, 79; * T Hogarth 80, 78. 159: R Allenby (Aus) 82, 77. 160: C Coody 83, 77; S Jones 82, 78; B Casper 83, 77. 161: K Green 87, 74. 162: L Roberts 85, 77. 163: G Brewer 84, 79; * J Miller 82, 81. 176: A Palmer 89, 87 179: D Ford 85, 94

FULL FIRST-ROUND SCORES: 67: J Huston. 68: P Stankowski. 69: P Azinger. 70: T Woods. 71: C Rocca (It), J M Olazábal (Sp), N Price (Zim). 72: L Janzen, S Appleby (Aus), C Montgomerie (GB), D Berganio, D Love III, F Couples, T Tolles, P-U Johansson (Swe), B Langer (Ger), W Wood. 73: C Rose, J Parnevik (Swe), A Lyle (GB), K Perry, T Lehman, E Els (SA), F Funk. 74: D Forsman, J Sluman, D Waldorf, D Hart, D Frost (SA), J Furyk, M Calcavecchia, M Ozaki (Japan). 75: S Cink, S Torrance (GB), F Zoeller, C Pavin, V Singh (Fiji), B Crenshaw, T Watson, N Faldo (GB), M O'Meara 76: J Leonard, F Nobilo (NZ), S Elkington (Aus), P Mickelson, G Player (SA). 77: J Cook, L Westwood (GB), T Aaron, S McCarron, D Ogrin, M Brooks, J Maggert, J Morse, C Stadler, T Kite, B Faxon, Y Kaneko (Japan), G Norman (Aus), J Nicklaus, S Stricker, I Woosnam (GB). 78: D A Weibring, E Fiori, * S Scott, R Tway, D Duval. 79: S Hoch, Mize, Bradley, Floyd, Bladon, Boros. 80: Hogarth. 81: McNulty, Ballesteros. 82: * J Miller, Jones, Allenby. 83: Coody, Casper. 84: Brewer 85: Ford, Roberts. 87: Green. 89: Palmer.

** denotes amateur*

ON MONDAY

Play Interactive Team *Cricket and win a* £10,000 first prize plus Test match tickets.

Scotland's cricketers reach new heights

By Marcus Williams

SCOTTISH cricket is celebrating the most momentous event in its history after the national team qualified for the World Cup at the first attempt by defeating Ireland on a faster scoring rate in the rain-interrupted ICC Trophy third-place match in Malaysia yesterday.

However, before we are carried away with images of tartan armies marching on Lord's in the summer of 1999, it has to be pointed out that opponents for Scotland's happy, but largely weekend, band of cricketers in the group stage will include Australia, West Indies and Pakistan — and they are unlikely to bat with the abandon that caused the Ireland coach, Mike Hendrick, to call his men's performance "disgraceful".

While the team, captained by George Salmond, a teacher at George Watson's College, celebrated in Kuala Lumpur, there was also a warm glow around the Scottish Cricket Union's headquarters in Edinburgh.

"We have been inundated with calls and faxes from people congratulating us," Alex Ritchie, the general manager, said. "It will be absolutely marvellous for Scottish cricket." The players' many hours in a Strathclyde heat chamber to prepare for the humidity were clearly well spent.

Election campaigners may be debating political independence for Scotland, but cricketing autonomy was achieved in 1994 in the restructuring of the game in the British Isles. This, together with qualification for the World Cup, will bring a welcome injection of finance from the International Cricket Council's development fund and renewed interest from sponsors. The players had to pay their own way to Malaysia.

Cricket has been played in Scotland for more than 250 years, but, although a Lanarkshire man, Mike Denness, led England in the Seventies, on the scale of Scottish sporting interest cricket figures below football and golf.

They did beat the Australians by 45 runs in 1882 and, more recently, have recorded two narrow victories over English counties in the Benson and Hedges Cup (*Lancashire by three runs* in 1986 and Northamptonshire by two runs in 1990), and Freuchie, from Fife, won the national village championship in 1985.

The ICC Trophy final will be contested by Kenya and Bangladesh today. Both are assured of qualifying for the World Cup, but national pride is at stake. After one death and hundreds of injuries in Bangladesh during celebrations of their semi-final victory, police have tightened security. Princes Street, however, was reported quiet last night.

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Obituaries, page 25

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Beware of the Tatton turnips, Mr Bell

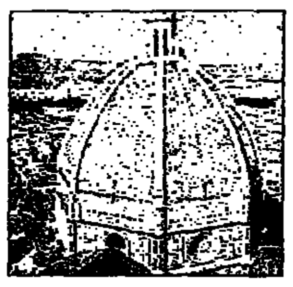
Paul Heiney · 11

THE TIMES
weekend

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

From frantic Florence to laid-back Naples

travel · 19-21



Peter Barnard on why teaching philosophy to children could change all our lives for good

DES JENSON/RODIN MUSEUM

Whether you believe something is possible or impossible doesn't mean that it is. People used to believe it was impossible to go into Space

DANIEL,
Nine-year-old schoolboy,
Glasgow, 1997

I distrust the incommunicable: it is a source of all violence

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE,
42-year-old existential philosopher, Paris, 1947

"Children are encouraged to articulate ideas they didn't know they had, and weren't credited with having," says Clare Cassidy, who teaches philosophical inquiry (PI). "They sit there looking like miniatures of Rodin's *The Thinker*"

Little people, big ideas

Every parent has a misty-eyed tale of the day Alice or Thomas stopped pulling the wings from a butterfly or kicking holes in the greenhouse and said something, well, profound. You won't believe what he/she said today! But you will believe it because there is no downward age limit on insight.

With education among the top four issues at the coming election, with teachers angered by league tables that seem to treat their schools like football teams, and with some of our children portrayed as the sullen, resentful inhabitants of a scholastic wasteland, surely anyone suggesting that we should teach philosophy in primary schools must be one *textbook short of* the full set.

Yet this is exactly what is being mooted, though I say "exactly" at the risk of inciting a philosophical argument. The exact suggestion *is that Thom*as and Alice ought to be learning philosophical inquiry, or PI. And the most enthusiastic advocates of this radical move believe *that the teaching* of PI could change the nation, *empower* future generations, turn back the tide of federalist non-accountability. But before we get into that, we must explain the presence above of Daniel, in the company of Sartre. The point about the quote from Daniel is that it comes *not* from *some precocious* clever-clogs, but from an ordinary Glasgow boy out of an ordinary Glasgow home, a lad from a disadvantaged background.

And the point about the quote from Sartre is this: at the heart of PI is the belief that by teaching children to react to *situations using thoughts and* words, they will be much less likely to react using that stereotypical Glasgow debating point, a punch up the throat.

Catherine McCall, director of the Centre for Philosophical Inquiry at Glasgow University, is the leading exponent of PI in Britain. She will speak at an international conference on philosophy in schools at King's College, London, on Monday and Tuesday, but this gathering will not be a love-in for proponents of PI, because there are plenty of dissenters.

*This dissent need not, how*ever, detain us much. Nobody in the argument is opposed to children expressing profound feelings and beliefs. Dr McCall's opponents are mostly sceptical about whether what she is encouraging is really *philosophical inquiry* or whether it is merely the ability to reason. This difference may be the core of the internal debate, but for most of us the apple itself is a lot more interesting.

Dr McCall is a philosopher *in her mid-40s* who encountered philosophy for children when she worked at a university in New Jersey. While there, in 1984, she ran graduate *courses in philosophy for teach*ers. Most of those applying happened to be teaching first grade (five-year-olds).

She was fascinated to discover that even with children of that age you could get results. Dr McCall told me: "It works on the basis of a proposition being put and the children reacting with statements which begin 'I agree because' or 'I disagree because'. It worked brilliantly right from the start."

Dr McCall returned to Scotland in 1990 and applied her American experience there. She *ran, and still runs,* philosophy courses for teachers, and at present there are about 35 postgrad teachers in 20 schools around Scotland: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Renfrewshire, the Borders, Inverness.

Parts of the philosophy estab*lishment regard Dr McCall as a maverick,* but she is at pains to underline a degree of conformity: "I am not teaching children philosphy. I am getting them to philosophise. It's oral, spoken, not written and read. Philosophy is full of jargon, but this isn't. We are drawing things out of children, not putting things into them."

Dr McCall *insists that* these discussions have to be led by people trained in philosophy, so getting PI on to *the national curriculum would* be extremely difficult because of the number of teachers who would need to do graduate courses in philosophy.

PI seems to be easier to accommodate in Scotland than in England and Wales because the Scottish education system is more flexible, but Dr McCall believes it could eventually work anywhere in the UK, provided there was one qualified teacher to cover about four or five schools, and assuming some time could be found in the school day. There are about a dozen schools in England, and a similar number in Wales, that have used PI.

One of the more remarkable aspects of Dr McCall's work is that much of her focus is on "ordinary" children. Her PI programme is not a *middle-class exercise aimed at bright* children in the best schools. *She has encouraged PI among* disadvantaged children from poor backgrounds.

How does a PI session work? This is best explained by *putting the quote from Daniel* in context. Recently Dr McCall was leading (acting as the facilitator) for a group of primary school children. She *starts by reading an extract* from a book, usually, though not always, one of the books she has written for the purpose.

"In this particular case," Dr McCall says, "the subject of magic had arisen. A girl named Gemma asked: 'How can a person try to make you believe that something is both possible and impossible at the same time?' That was when Daniel said: 'Whether you believe something is possible or impossible doesn't mean it is. People used to believe it was impossible to go into Space.' "Quite honestly," Dr McCall says, "if you got that from philosophy students at university you would be really pleased."

Clearly these children do not know Russell from Sartre, Descartes from Wittgenstein. It *is* likely that most of *them* never will, for PI does not presume to be a practice match for the big *game called Philosophy.*

So what is PI doing for these children? "They become better listeners," Dr McCall says. "They are more creative and *skilled in hypothetical think*ing, they explore and understand the logical consequences of hypothesis. These changes have effects far beyond the confines of the discussion, because these skills help them in arts and sciences. The use of structure and their understanding of logic helps in mathematics, for example."

All of which sounds very useful in terms of producing children who are better educated. But if we have learnt one thing in the history of mankind, it is that better education does *not* automatically produce a better, more civilised adult population.

Does PI offer some hope? "I think it does," Dr McCall says. "I have seen cases, among teenagers, where PI has had a marked effect; there have been amazing gains. We have seen diminished aggression, because these *young people have* learnt to reason with each other instead of becoming violent. In order to react they have to listen.

"*Potentially, I can see enor*mous benefits to society, though some of the effects are completely unpredictable. If more people are thinking for *themselves, and thinking deep*ly, they would be able to make changes, and we would have a more civic society. PI empowers people and it enables them to see *through* the rhetoric and the promises they get from officialdom. Of course, such a development would remove power from the centre. If people are thinking creatively, who knows what they might come up with?"

Indeed. Given that the people who run our lives are not famous for encouraging us to think, a flood of funding for PI *seems* unlikely. Dr McCall went to Brussels on Easter

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SERIOUS SHOPPING FREEBIES

ROBERT CRAMPTON

A month ago I devoted this column to the virtues of my local hardware shop, the one whose owner sells everything. My girlfriend went into the shop shortly after the column was published. She wanted some nylon string. Naturally, the hardware man had plenty of varieties of nylon string to choose from, and he also had several photocopies of what he was calling "my advertisement" laid out on his counter. It turns out he does not "sell" everything: he refused to allow her to pay for the string.

My first reaction to this news was to indulge in a long and pleasant corruption fantasy. I don't think I'd make much of sleazester: my fantasy first lines tended towards the parochial and the small-time. "The salad rolls in Percy Ingle are exceptionally good at the moment...", "I see that Broadway Wines has draught Guinness in cans..." or, "My, my, I do admire the service at Whitechapel Sainsbury's these days".

It is not that I can lay claim to any Martin Bell-esque standards of personal probity. I think my fantasies were so dismally limited because the freebie is such a small and fuzzy concept in the British shopping consciousness. Shopkeepers here hardly ever round down bills, offer samples or otherwise give their goods away. Or hardly ever to me. Restaurateurs do, occasionally — although I once worked out in an idle moment that I had spent £3,000 over three years in one restaurant and in that whole time only ever received a (smallish) cognac by way of a complimentary gesture. Clearly that restaurateur hated me for some reason.

In France, shopkeepers are always giving things away, or so I am led to believe. I have never been given anything for nothing by a French shopkeeper, but I have seen it done on the television. One of the staples of those adverts attempting to sell products by associating them with a swinging, continental lifestyle is the scene in which a good-looking person rushes around a colourful market simply lifting fruit off a stall and running away without paying. The stallholder invariably responds to this loss of income with a Gallic shrug and a cheery wave. There is no doubt some sort of lost rural-idyll fantasy being played to here, a fantasy shared by many British people. None the less, to set such a scene in the average British market would be impossible — if the Nicole-equivalent ran around stealing their apples, the traders would be bashing in the windscreen of her Renault Clio.

In Britain, the freebie traditionally extends as far as a squirt of perfume you do not want and do not like from a woman in danger of collapsing under the weight of her own foundation. You do, occasionally, get offered gratis lumps of cheese in very progressive delicatessens, and once I was invited to try a liqueur as part of some doomed experiment in a new off-licence with an optimistic view of human nature and an inadequate understanding of the licensing laws. I cannot recall ever being offered anything else. I don't know why. Something to do with the Enclosure Acts, early industrialisation, population density and Protestantism, I suspect. Or it could just be that shopkeepers here recognise that we are uncomfortable with the idea of being given things. Or maybe they are mean.

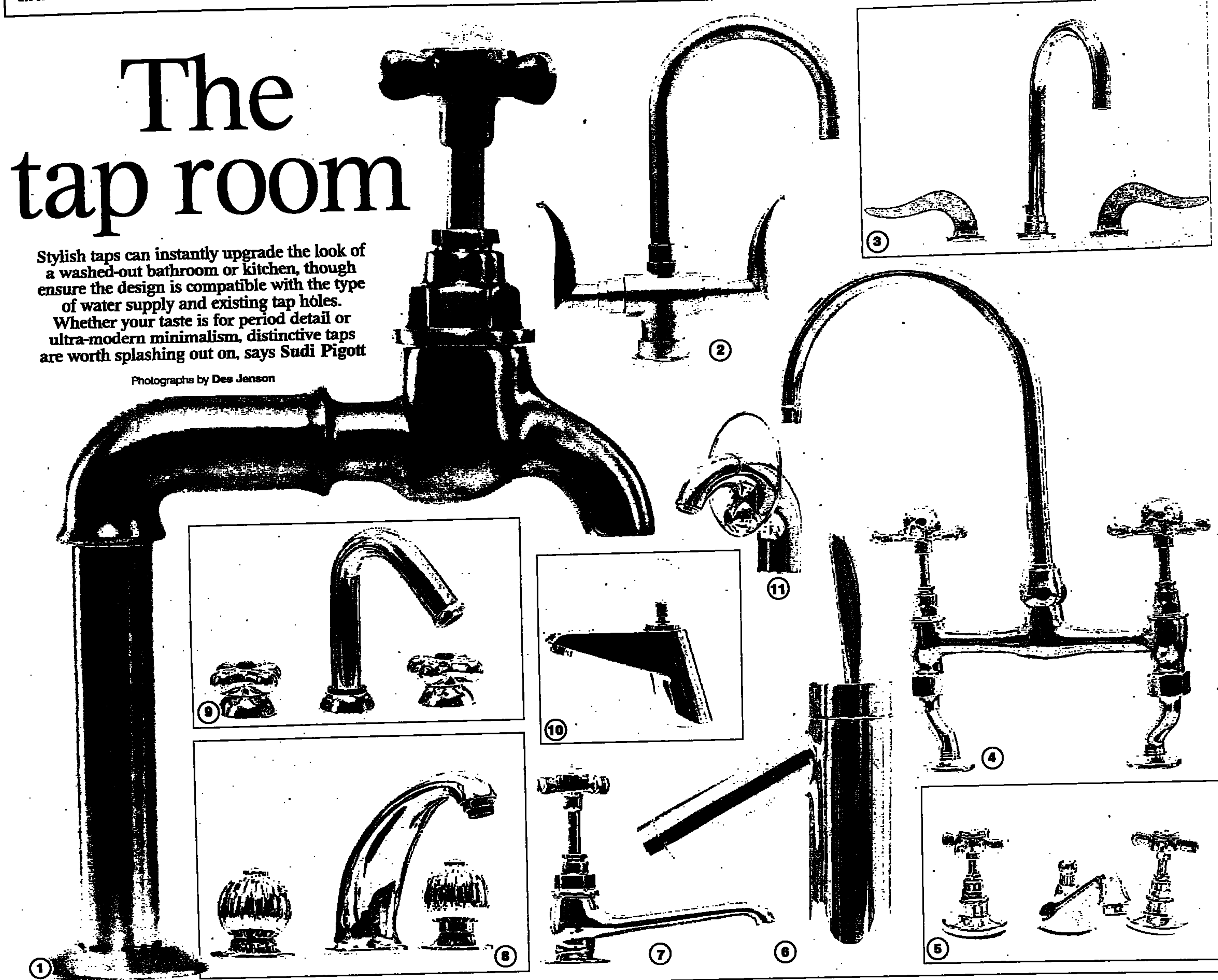
Whatever: the average British shopper reacts to a tray of trial cocktail sausages or a free sweetie as if they are being asked to take poison. The thought process usually goes, "How many people are looking at me?" followed by, "What's the catch?" followed by, "No, better not, I pay me way, me". Men are more cautious than women, I think. Getting a man to accept a freebie is like getting him to accept a compliment — nigh on impossible. The opportunities for practice are rare, but I am doing my best to make it easier. A while ago I spent £10.27p on some fruit — I like fruit — and the man said: "Call it a tenner." "No, no," I said, scrabbling for change. "No, really," he said. "Really?" I said, already holding out the 27 pence. "Yeah, go on," he said. "You sure," I asked? "Yes," he said, exasperated. "Er, honestly?" "Yes, a tenner'll do," he spat, as if speaking through a mouthful of clementine pips (they say they're seedless, but they never are). With a furtive look around, I slid the change back into my pocket. "Thank you," I said. "Yeah, right," he said.

He has not repeated the gesture.

The tap room

Stylish taps can instantly upgrade the look of a washed-out bathroom or kitchen, though ensure the design is compatible with the type of water supply and existing tap holes. Whether your taste is for period detail or ultra-modern minimalism, distinctive taps are worth splashing out on, says **Sudi Pigott**

Photographs by **Des Jenson**



1 Bibcock tap suitable for kitchen Butlers' sinks, hot/cold/drinking water, with choice of cruciform or lever-action taps. Solid brass with porcelain fittings in non-tarnish brass, nickel or chrome finishes, £199.75, or £211.50 for NTB and nickel, from Czech & Speake, 39 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (0171-439 0216).

2 Swan-like spout and streamlined hot/cold levered three-hole Alto tap in chrome, with pop-up waste, £480.57, from Max Pike Bathrooms, 4 Eccleston Street, SW1 (0171-730 7216).

3 Pacific three-hole chrome taps, with clear blue glass levers, £695.60, from Max Pike Bathrooms, as above.

4 Limited edition Gothic taps, with scull and crossbone and red/blue glass eyes for the bath. In "incabrass" non-tarnish gold alloy, £338.48, chrome/nickel, £289.71, from Stephen Einhorn, 210 Upper Street, N1 (0171-359 4977).

5 Edwardian-style Bensham, with cross heads, ceramic heat indicators, three-hole mixer taps and pop-up waste, £179 in gold finish from Simply Bathrooms (0181-773 5000).

6 Sleek chrome basin mixer by Philippe Starck, inspired by traditional farmhouse stand pump, £193 plus VAT, from Alternative Plans, 9 Hester Road, SW11 (0171-228 6460).

7 Edwardian-style solid brass basin taps, with extra-long 5in spout, £263.38 in chrome, £287.88 nickel/brass, from Czech & Speake, as above.

8 Classic Sahara taps with grooved, dome heads and sleek central spout. Available in many finishes, including chrome and antique gold. Three-hole basin mixer from £133, from Mckon (0171-733 8011).

9 Chunky Balocchi taps, with resin handles, in a choice of 13 colours, including orange and turquoise, and three metal finishes. Prices from £160.38 for a three-hole basin mixer, from Original Bathrooms, 143-145 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 2PN (0181-940 7554).

10 Italian-made Fantini chrome monobloc tap, with jewel-like coloured glass, wooden or chrome ball decoration, £175 plus VAT, from Alternative Plans, as above.

11 Fashionably minimalist Copernico mixer taps replaces standard temperature and water-flow lever with circular handle. Chrome monobloc basin mixer, £259.08, from Original Bathrooms, as above.

'Behaviour has improved as a result of PI'

Continued from page 1

Monday in search of EU funding. She is president of Sophia (wisdom), an organisation whose full name is the European Foundation for Doing Philosophy with Children.

Sophia was started in 1991 and has members in at least 21 countries, including France, a country steeped in philosophy; whereas in Britain, of course, the best known French philosopher is Eric Cantona.

Dr McCall has no illusions: "You're not going to walk into a playground and find children philosophising," she says. But there are playgrounds where behaviour has improved as a result of PI.

Clare Cassidy, aged 26, teaches at St Mungo's Roman Catholic Primary School, which is "as inner-city as inner-city Glasgow could be". Miss Cassidy took an M.Ph at Glasgow under Dr McCall to become a facilitator. "The children are encouraged to articulate ideas they didn't know they had and weren't credited with having," she says. "They all sit there looking serious, like miniatures of Rodin's *The Thinker*. You can hear a pin drop," she says.

"PI definitely builds confidence. I think that's helped by the fact that what the children are saying isn't necessarily their own opinion, it's a point of view, so they have a kind of anonymity. And the facilitator has to learn not to control, though you have to keep it philosophical otherwise it just becomes a chat." Miss Cassidy says that she is usually more confused about a subject at the end of a session than when it started, "which is great, because that shakes up preconceptions. It's impossible to say how PI affects people in the longer term, but I think it will always be with them, even if they don't continue it in formal groups".

Miss Cassidy and Dr McCall find excitement in the way discussions expand and go off at tangents. Recently Miss Cassidy led a group which began with the issue of whether Space dies, and moved on to what happens to people when they die. A child offered the prosaic "Body into coffin". Others identified the difference between body and spirit, which led to an attempt to describe the spirit. One child concluded: "The spirit is the best part of you, that goes on."

Well, that sounds philosophical to me. Especially allowing for Dr McCall's admission that "a roomful of philosphers will always have an argument as to what philosophy is".

Children, it seems, have the wisdom to avoid that issue.

● *Anyone wishing to attend next week's conference at King's College, London, should call 0171-873 2231.*

SOMETHING **TO THINK** ABOUT

TEN questions devised by Dr Catherine McCall to kickstart philosophical inquiry sessions with children:

1 How do you know you are not dreaming at the moment? 2 How can you know whether something is true or not true? 3 Is there a last number? 4 Is it right to eat animals? 5 What's the difference between pretending and lying? 6 Is it fair to lock animals in cages? 7 What's the difference between a character in a film and a real person? 8 Is there a difference between your mind and your brain? 9 Do you think in words? 10 What is Space?

THEY SAY...

HERE's why some Scottish children like philosophising:

"Because there are interesting details to think about. For example, can you see the wind? And there are somewheres and nowheres." — Nikki Taylor, ten.

"It's good when we argue because we come out laughing." — Elaine Green, ten.

"It has made me see that there are many answers to the one question." — Sarah Paterson, 13.

"We can spend the whole class on one question, going from handicapped people to God to spirits to ghosts." — Suzanne Graham, ten.

"It helps you catch on quicker at small thoughts, or paragraphs that you don't usually find interesting." — Anne-Marie Thomson, 13.

"Philosophy is very good because you use the other part of your brain you don't use while you are doing your maths." — Paul Adie, ten.

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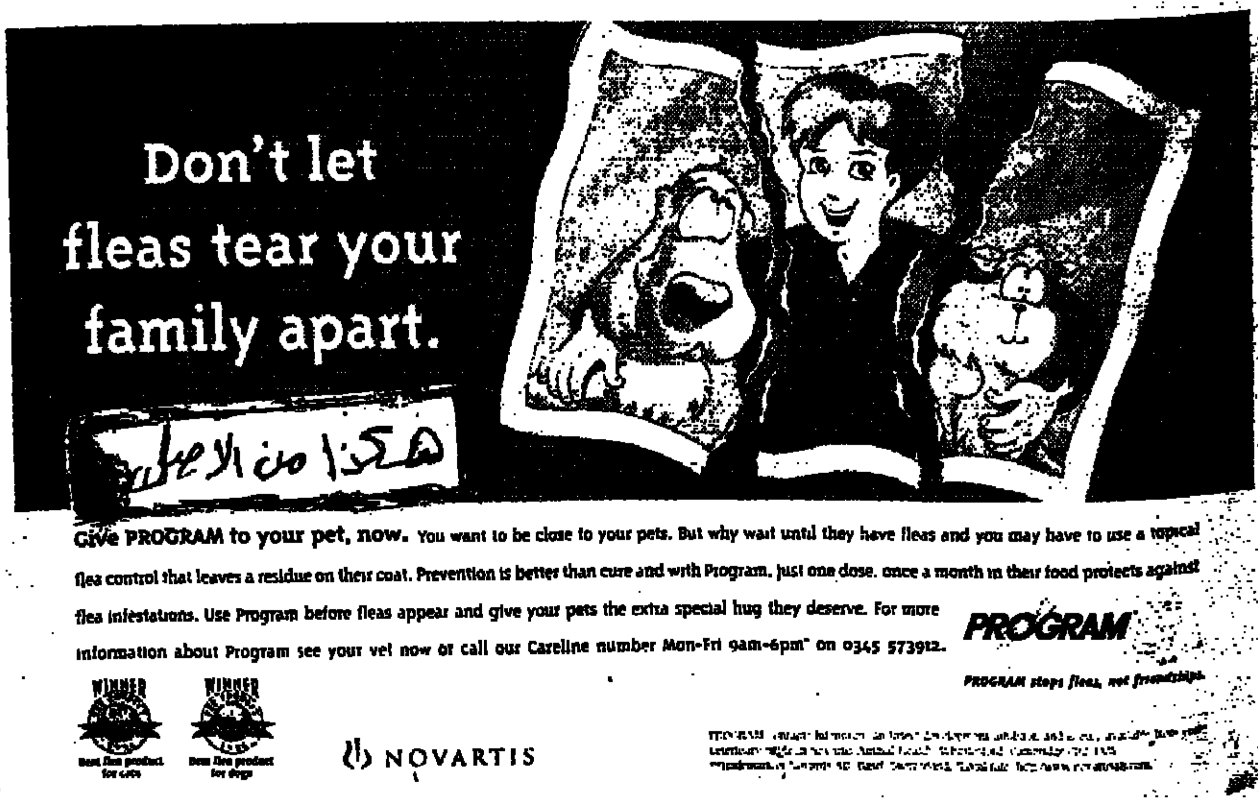

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Duck-egg blue sleeveless top, £85, and matching cardigan, £110, N Peal, 37 Burlington Arcade, W1 (0171-493 9220). White flat-front linen trousers, £69, Kookai, branches nationwide (0171-937 4411). Buckle mules, £32.99, Faith, branches nationwide (0800 289297)

Knit pickings

Cast aside those chunky sweaters this spring and lighten up your wardrobe with a range of fine-gauge knitwear, says **Heath Brown**

Mention knitwear and it conjures up images of chunky sweaters and cosy cardigans. But fine-gauge knits are less bulky and light enough to wear in the summer. They are easy to team with this season's silks, sheers and chiffons and are also extremely versatile.

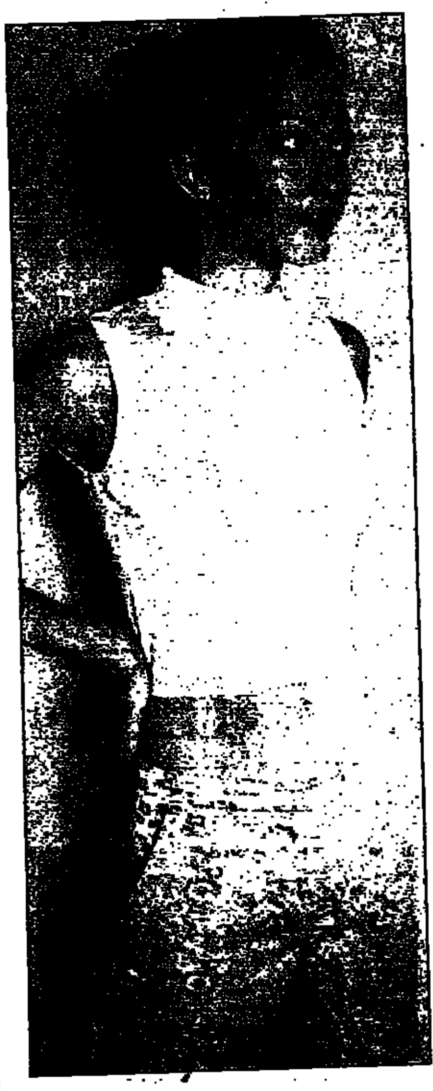
The colours should be muted and pastel: Lilac, baby blue, burnt orange and powder pink are among the favourites as well as creamy white, which matches the antique lace effects around at the moment.

Long and short-sleeved tops can be paired with soft skirts or trousers. Knitted dresses are good for those brisk spring breezes and thinner, long-line cardigans are easy to throw on at dusk.

The look can be classic with variations on the twinset, or more modern in crop-tops or singlets. T-shirt shapes in fine knit look smart and are more acceptable than the cotton variety for the office and for more formal occasions. A finer gauge knit can usually smarten up a simple outfit. Crew-neck tops with either long or short sleeves are perfect for wearing with a skirt or trouser suit.

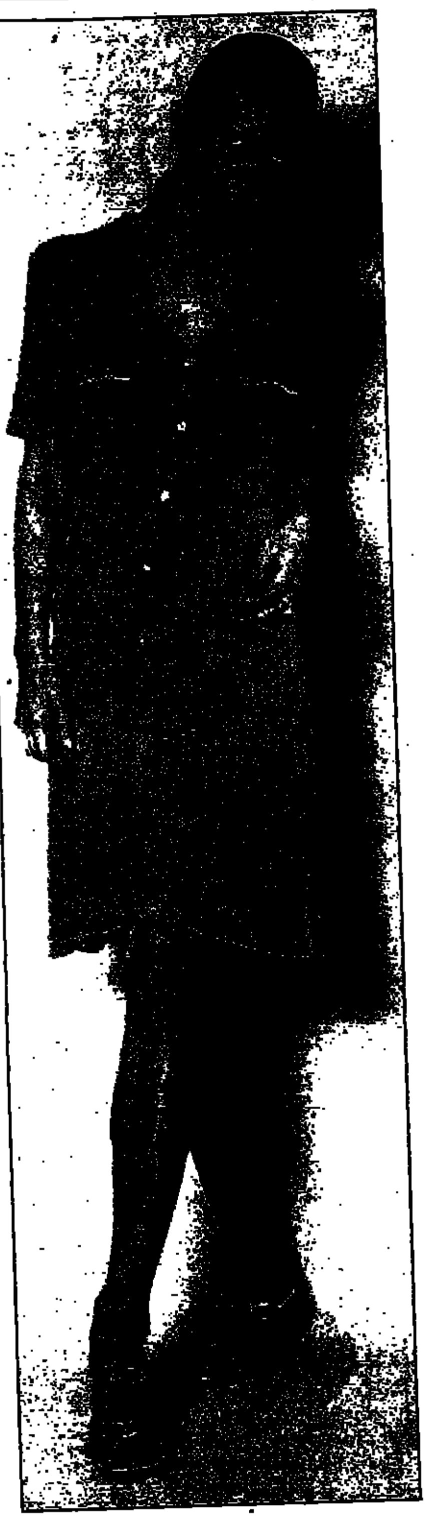
It is not just tops and dresses that work well in fine knits. Skirts and trousers are given a softer, more glamorous feel that is both comfortable and stylish.

The lightness of fine knits makes them ideal for a layered look without appearing cumbersome. Cardigans look good worn over vests or scoop-neck tops, or when teamed with silks and thin synthetics to give an elegant, summery style.

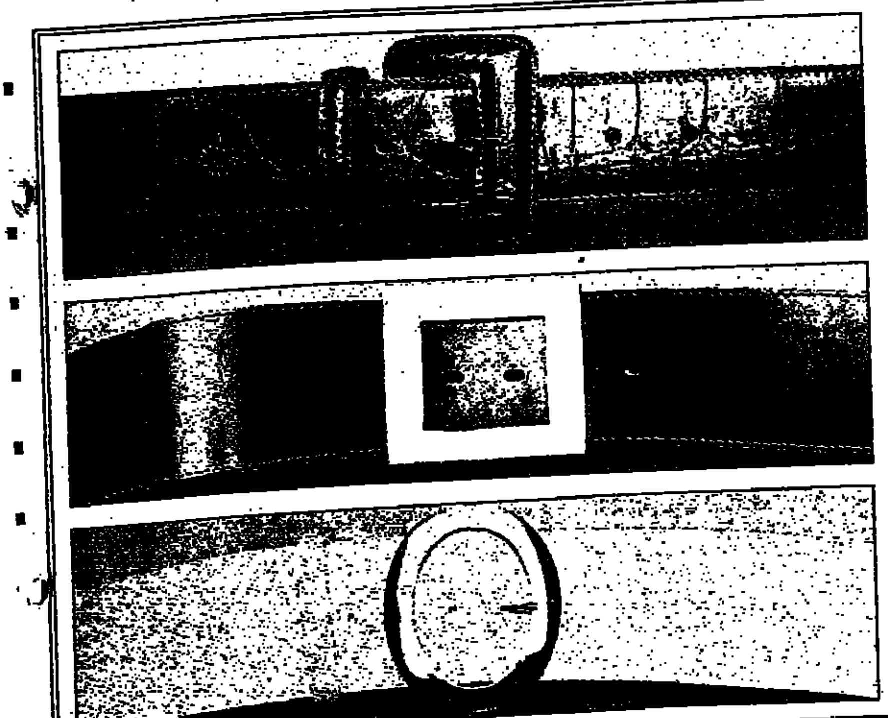


Lilac round-neck sleeveless fine knit top, £25, Warehouse, branches nationwide (0171-278 3491). Gold damask trousers, £65, selected branches of Dorothy Perkins (0171-291 2604)

Pale blue fine knit sweater, £104, by Joleynian, from Pellicano, 63 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-629 2205). Cream zigzag knit skirt, £45, Kookai, branches nationwide (0171-937 4411)



Orange knit dress, £182, by Armand Basi, 12 Floral Street, WC2 (0171-278 4843). Suede mules, £65, Red or Dead, 1 Sloane Street, SW1; 18 Eldon Court, Devonshire Street, Sheffield (0114-273 7827)



THREE OF A KIND

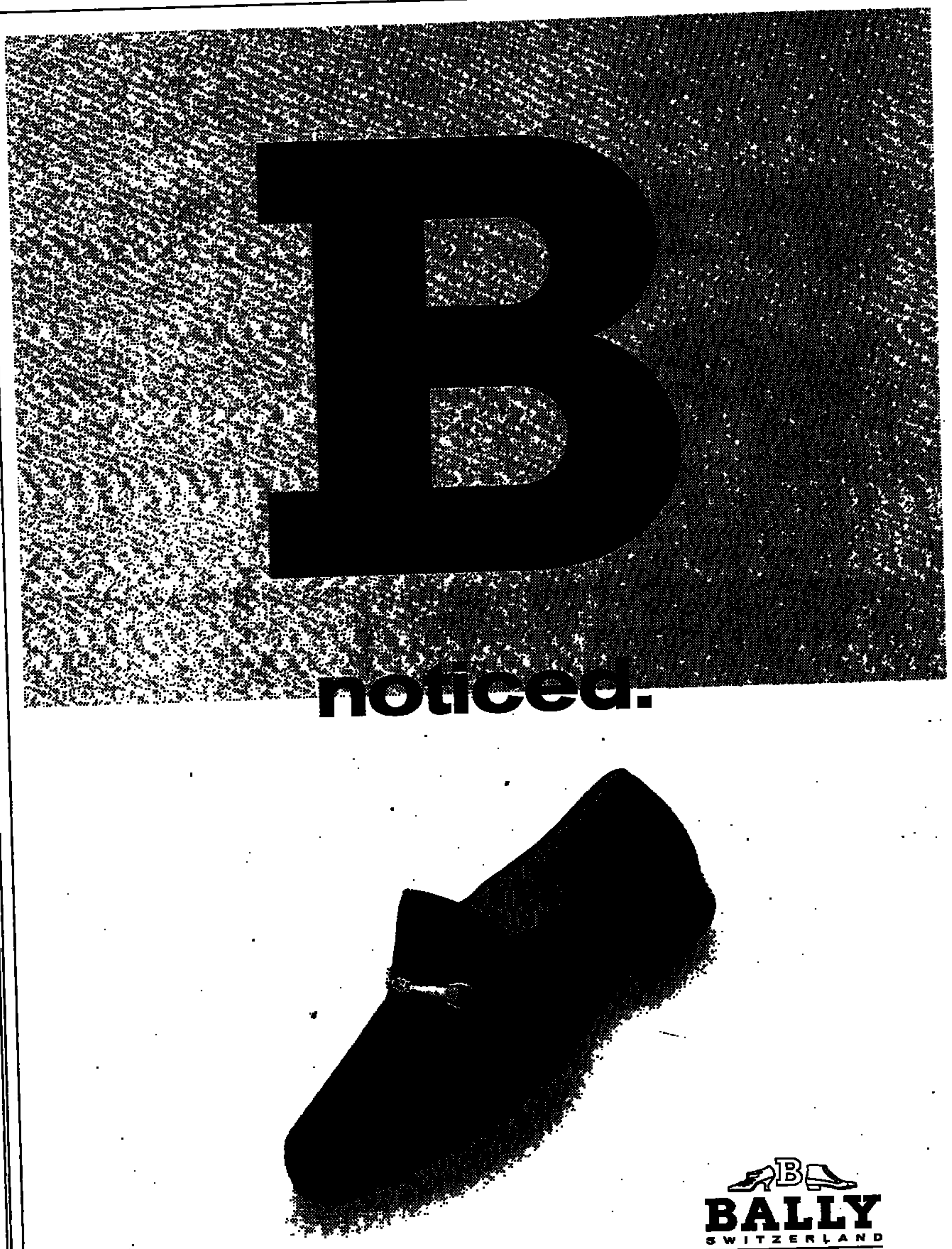
THIS season sees belts and buckles going wider and bolder. Forget thin, delicate straps and the fine chain designs — bigger is better. H.B.

Red leather mock snake belt, £75, Mulberry, 41-42 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 3900)

Wide leather belt with square buckle, £49.95, Harrods leather room, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-730 1234)

Cream-coloured fine mock croc oval buckle belt, £61, Otto Glanz, Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0181-365 1711)

Photographs by **Richard Burns.** Styling by **Amandip Uppal.** Hair and make-up by **Sarah Gottschack** using Glauca Rossi Products (mail order, 0171-289 7485)



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BALLY
SWITZERLAND
SINCE 1851

BRIAN CHAPPLE

Borde Hill (left) provides a history of plant introductions, while Greenfield Lodge (right) is a well-established woodland garden

Splash of spring colour

OPEN THIS WEEKEND

■ Borde Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex (01444 450326)

1.5 miles north of Haywards Heath. Open daily, 10am-6pm. £2.50, children £1

Borde Hill is a good example of how the evolution of great gardens is cyclical. The famous plant collection at the garden was first established during the 1890s by Colonel Stephenson Clarke from the fruits of plant-hunting trips to the Himalayas and subsequent plant breeding, yielding such items as the most famous of all camellias, 'Donation', which the colonel raised.

Now the garden is undergoing a renaissance, with new flower gardens that peak in the summer — such as the rose, herbaceous and kitchen gardens that have been created during the last two years — following on from the spring and early summer feast of the "woody" plants for which Borde Hill has been so long renowned.

Sited on the rolling, slightly sandy Sussex terrain so ideally suited to the magnolias, camellias, rhododendrons and ornamental trees that were planted with discernment during the first half of this century, Borde Hill at this time of year provides an education into the history of plant introductions — as well as a visual feast.

■ Hughenden Manor, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire (01494 532580)

Off A4128, 1.5 miles north of High Wycombe. Open Wed to Sun until Oct 12, noon to 5pm. £1, children 50p

The Tory Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, who lived at Hughenden and to whom the place is now a shrine, was a trees man. His wife, Mary-Anne, was a representative lover of colourful Victorian flower gardens; brilliant colour schemes of annuals from June until the autumn.

Today, the garden and surrounding woodlands, as restored and cared for by the National Trust, remain faithful to both but at this time of year it is the woodland and trees that the visitor will principally enjoy.

The Chiltern beeches that form the backcloth to other planting are just beginning to burst into leaf and offset the array of fine Victorian evergreens, such as cedars and spruces, that combine with the house's Gothic architecture to picturesque effect. You can imagine the flamboyant Prime Minister setting out from the house to admire the primroses that are still abundant in the woodland and sit, as he did, on one of his wife's rustic wooden seats.

■ Greenfield Lodge, Lasswade, Midlothian (0131-663 9338)

Off A768 Loanhead to Lasswade road, take Church Road then Green Lane. Open all year by request (telephone day before) and first Tues of each month until Sept, 2-5pm. £1.50, children free

It is something of a surprise to discover a well-established woodland garden of nearly two acres on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The garden's longevity is represented by some now impressive trees — in particular specimens of the Deodar cedar, yews and oaks.

There are some superb specimens of rhododendron 'Christmas Cheer', which has been in flower since mid-January and will continue well into April, contrasting with treasures such as a huge array of hellebores, scillas, and chionodoxas of which Greenfield holds the NCCPG National Collection.

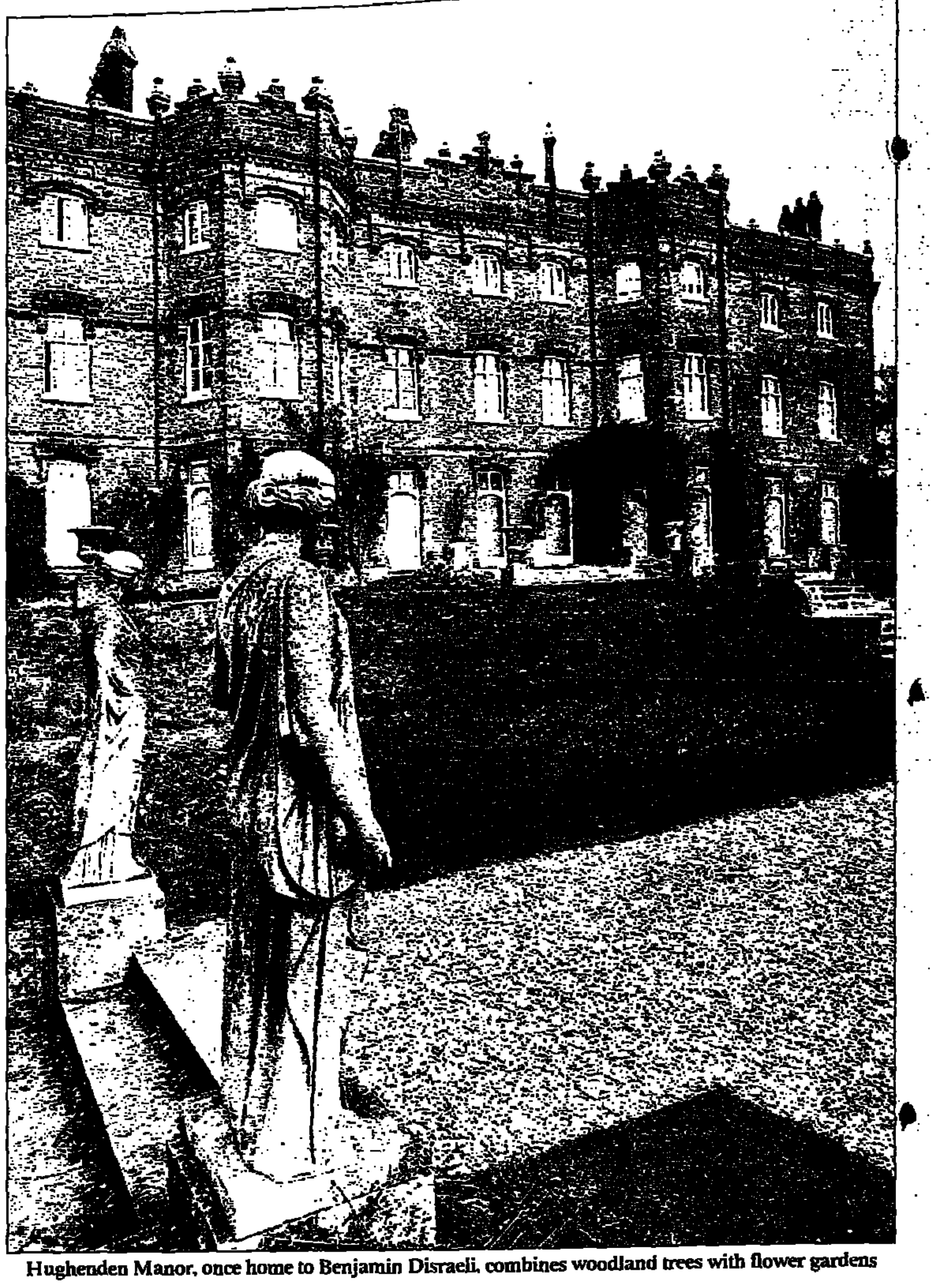
The garden is at its best during the spring, although later in the year the planting is cleverly arranged to cope with the semi-drought conditions that a few hot weeks invariably induce.

■ Spring Wood, Hackwood Park, Nr. Basingstoke, Hampshire (01256 323107)

1m south of Basingstoke on A339 (entrance off Tunworth Road). Open for one day only, tomorrow, 2-6pm. £2, OAPs £1, children free

Hackwood is one of the few formal woodland gardens laid out in the style of the great French designer, André le Nôtre, that survive in England, and as a result the 80 acres are listed Grade I in English Heritage's register of parks and gardens. A pattern of paths and avenues radiate out from a central statue of Ceres, one of a number of outstanding ornaments and buildings that include pavilions and a teahouse, some designed by James Gibbs.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE



Hughenden Manor, once home to Benjamin Disraeli, combines woodland trees with flower gardens

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Willowy beauties – and sexy with it

Male and female spirex mate enthusiastically, which explains the surprisingly large number of varieties, says **Barbara Abbs**

PICTURES

· There are willows for every type of landscape: they are fast-growing and beautiful all year, and can be any height from 100ft to a few inches

The next time you need a fast-growing tree, forget Leyland's cypress and think about willows. While there is something awe-inspiring about a fully grown *Leylandii* 100ft high, there are few things worse in a modestly sized garden than the same tree confined as a hedge or hacked about. Many willows, on the other hand, grow with equal speed, and several look even better when regularly cut back.

Cutting back, or pollarding, however, is not essential for everyone. Four years ago, Tony Thorlby, a retired academic turned landscape gardener and plant collector, decided that a pond would enhance the small field in the front of his house in Herefordshire. After much designing, calculating and damming, he made a mini-lake fed by an accompanying stream. He then thought a willow or two would look pleasant reflected in the water.

Today, 100 different willows later, one of the first trees he planted is 20ft tall and several are more than 8ft. If his collection — there are another 50 different willows waiting to be planted out — grows at the same rate, pollarding and coppicing may be essential one day, but at the moment he hopes to allow all the trees and shrubs to grow to their natural shape and size.

Apart from a few cultivars, willows are somewhat overlooked as ornamental trees, though basket willows are coming back into fashion on the ecological tide. The trees are diverse, fast-growing and beautiful all year. They can be any height, from 100ft to a few inches, have fine branches that may be red, yellow or purple, colourful catkins and leaves that vary from long and narrow, silvery or golden, grey and rounded, to a broad and glossy deep green.

There are willows for every type of landscape, from the natural to the artificial. Native willows blend perfectly into the coppices alongside railway lines or riverbanks, while small standards of *Salix integra* 'Hakuro-nishiki' make parasols of fluttering pink, cream and green variegated foliage. Smaller willows, such as *S. helvetica*, *retusa* and *repens* can be grown on rock gardens.

Although growing most willows is easy, choosing one can be problematic. Salix species were among the first woody plants to appear after the Ice Age. Being dioecious, with male and female plants, they mate enthusiastically, and have been doing so for a long time. The result is a large number of closely related species, subspecies, hybrids and varieties.

Identification is difficult. Often, only a magnifying glass will reveal differences. In addition, because of their long cultivation as a useful crop, there are scores of man-made cultivars, particularly among the osiers *S. purpurea* and *S. viminalis*. Willow wands are used for baskets, lobster pots and coracles, while branches and the trunks of *S. alba* ssp *caerulea* are used for cricket bats. Fine twigs make charcoal. Willows are also used to create living arbours, sculptures, screens, green walls on motorways and support for river banks, as well as for fuel — their energy-producing quality is high.

If you are buying a willow for its catkins, get a male clone. The anthers of the male forms, which produce the coloured pollen, are more showy. Catkins, of both sexes, are surprisingly varied and long-lasting. Around the edge of Mr Thorlby's lake, the first catkins to appear are those of *S. aegyptiaca*, the musk willow, already 7ft-8ft tall after only three years. At first they are silky grey, then the male anthers produce a vivid orange pollen which later pales to yellow.

The long catkins of *S. japonica* are equally attractive; they are held horizontally and have maroon anthers which turn red. *S. acutifolia* 'Blue Streak,' which grows to 10ft after three years, has the palest grey catkins, which sit upright along purple branches.

Next there is *S. gracilistyla* 'Melanostachys', which is widely available and known for its black catkins and red anthers. This is not one of the easier willows to keep, and the catkins resemble wet cats' fur. It is one of the few that Mr Thorlby has had to replace.

In winter, against the dark twigs of the alders that edge the field, the orangey branches of *S. alba* and the silvery catkins on *S. daphnoides* stand out. The branches of *S. alba* cvs can be red, yellow, copper and brown, those of *S. purpurea* cvs are chestnutty purple; the violet willow, *S. daphnoides*, has branches covered with a bloom like spray from a can of silver paint.

In summer when the alders are in full, dark green leaf, the golden and silver willows form an exquisite contrast. The silver willow and the gold-leafed willow *S. alba* var *sericea*, and *S alba* 'Aurea', are as eyecatching as flowering trees. Other attention seekers are *S.* 'Erythroflexuosa,' *S. babylonica* var. *pekinensis* 'Tortuosa' (syn. *matsudana* 'Tortuosa') and *S. udensis* 'Sekka.' The first two are similar and have branches and leaves that twist like country lanes. *S.* 'Erythroflexuosa' is more spectacular, with warm golden bark and saffron-yellow branchlets. *S.* 'Sekka' has broad, fasciated stems which look like coiled mahogany moulding, long catkins and leaves which turn from rich green to bright yellow in autumn. Large weeping willows, such as *Salix alba* 'Tristis' or *S.* x *sepulcralis chrysocoma* are magnificent all year.

Although Christopher Newsholme, the doyen of willow growers, with 245 species and 213 cultivars, and author of *Willows: The Genus Salix*, the most comprehensive guide to these trees (Batsford, £29.99), suggests some for drier areas — *S. caprea* and the weeping *S* x *sepulcralis chrysocoma* are among them — willows generally prefer deep, damp soil. They are adaptable, however, and simply remain on the small side if conditions are not ideal. For extremely poor soils the native sallows *S. caprea* and *S. cinerea*, or their hybrids are recommended but, mostly, willows do not demand a highly fertile soil.

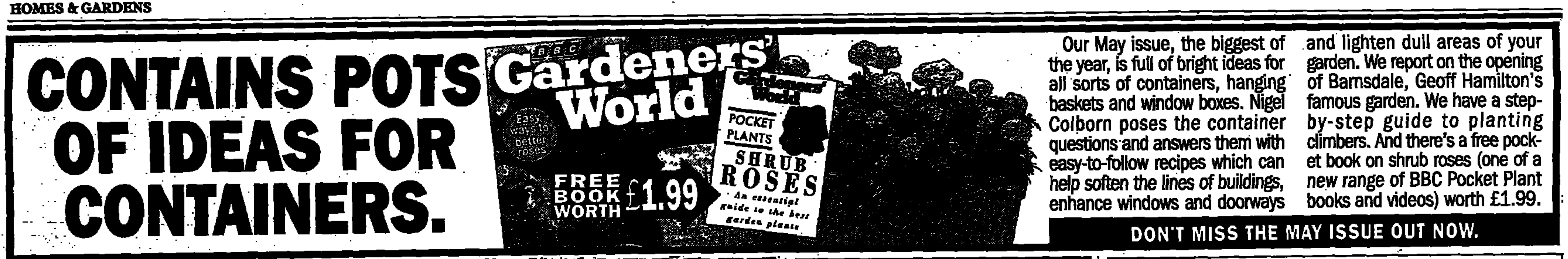
Many willows are easily propagated: just stick a pruning in the ground and it will probably root, and in three years it will form a respectable shrub.

WEEKEND TIPS

- Start runner bean plants in 3in pots under glass, for planting out next month.
- Watch for mice in greenhouses; they will take beans and sweetpeas.
- Outdoors, sow leeks, peas, broad beans, cauliflowers, brussels sprouts, onions, turnips, beetroot and parsnips.
- Cut down the old stems of hardy fuchsias, and feed well with old compost or manure.
- Sow hardy annuals such as calendula, nasturtium, lavatera and cornflowers in shallow drills where they are intended to flower.

FACT FILE

- **TO BUY:** Mail order from Penlyne Nursery, Lostwithiel, Cornwall (01208 872668); Blue Bell Nursery, Swadlincote, Derbyshire (01283 222091).
- **TO SEE:** Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury, Glos (01666 880220); Wolseley Garden Park, Wolseley Bridge, Stafford (01889 574888).



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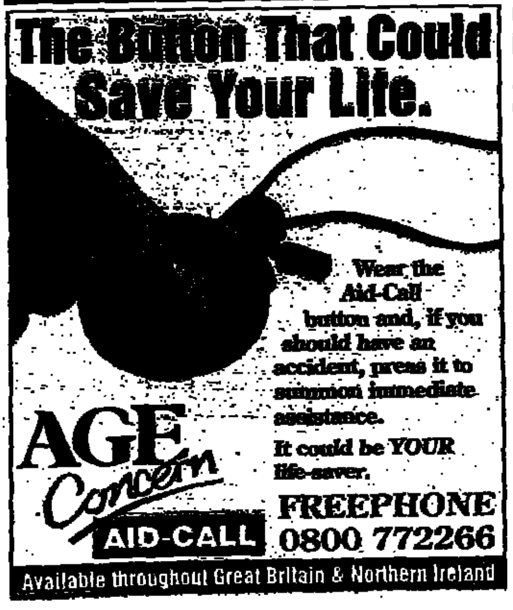

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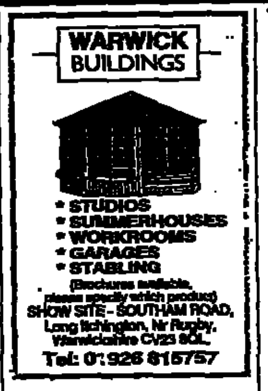

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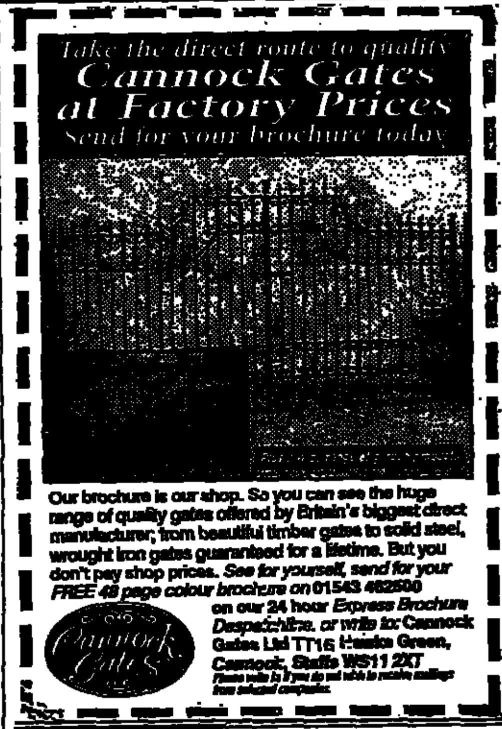

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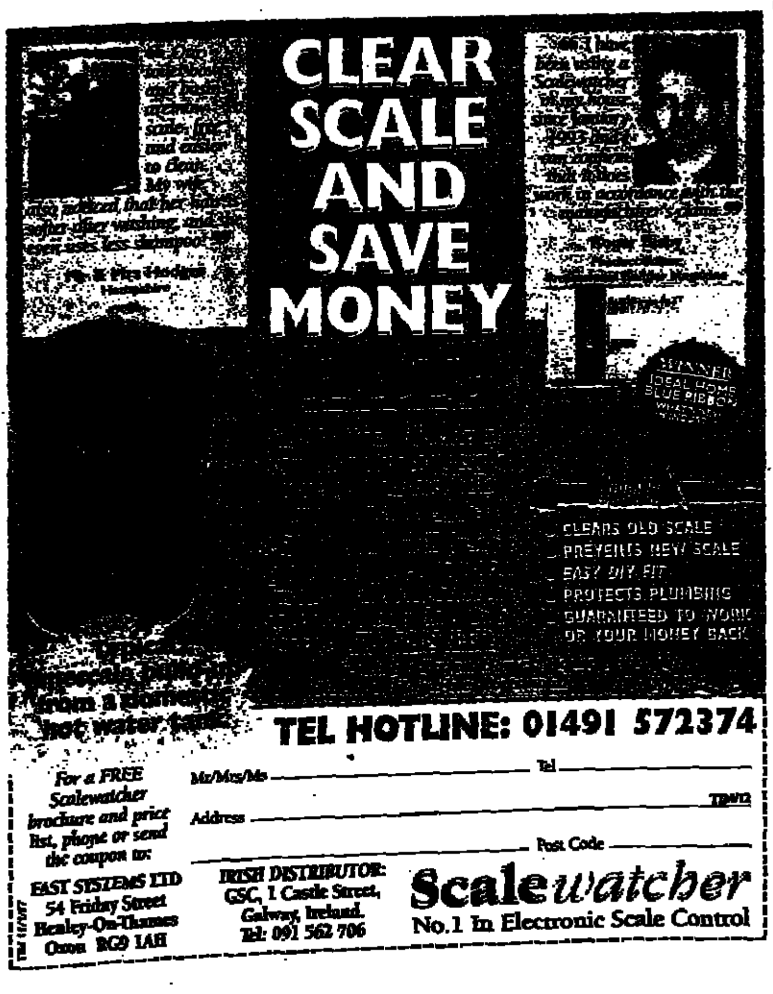

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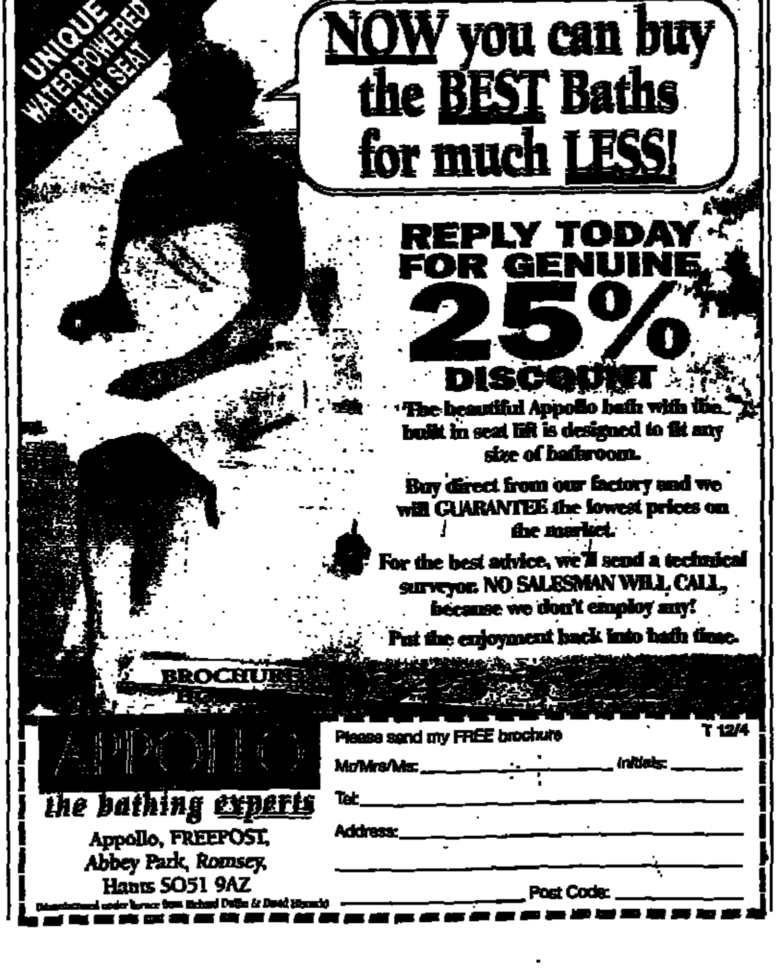

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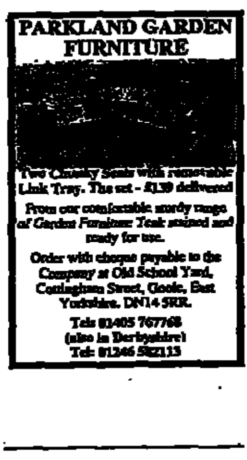

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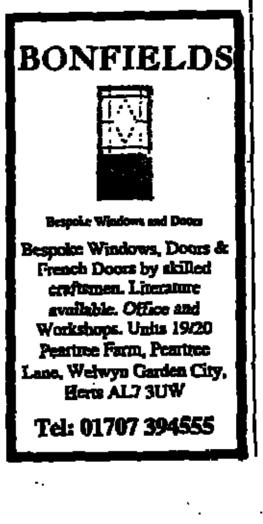

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Something nasty under the pile

While rotting compost heaps are good news for the garden, **Jane Owen** finds that they can bring unwanted visitors

Rats, attracted to the smell of rotting vegetables in the compost bin, posed a health risk for Susan Matthews and her children

Susan Matthews' approach to spotting a rat riffling through her compost heap was robust. She started an in-depth project with her four children on Dick Whittington. And she called the rat catcher to her north Kensington compost heap.

Unless they reach epidemic proportion, rats in the country are normally tolerated whereas, in the city, when rats emerge into the open they have to be deterred. The rat catcher came within a day of Ms Matthews call, put down the anticoagulant warfarin, and is visiting every two days to take away any bodies and re-poison the area when needed.

"I started the compost heap when we moved to this house last autumn, and I use kitchen waste and a little cereal. In February I wanted to turn the heap so I lifted the bottomless container, forked it over and accidently left a small gap at the bottom where the rat must have got in. It burrowed a deep tunnel," says Ms Matthews, a lecturer who is married to the artist Matthew Meadows.

Three well-fed cats, regular habitues of Ms Matthews' garden, did not deter the rats, who continued to burrow in the heap even after a container was put in place, its sides pressed firmly into the ground.

Rodent determination is all too familiar to Bob Bush, chief rat catcher for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, who has been doing the job for 24 years.

"The warmth will have attracted it along with the regular supply of food. Fat and grease attract rats, who are around all the time anyway, but emerge into the open when drains are broken or if their usual food sources become scarce. If rats aren't dealt with right away they will soon build up into an infestation," says Mr Bush, whose largest recorded catch was 20¾in long, nose to tail.

"By law you have to inform the local authority if there is a rat infestation. Compost heaps can attract rats because of the smell of rotting vegetables. Mostly they live in sewers on human excreta."

And that is why Mr Bush and his team, and all the other rat-catching teams, can use warrants to break into premises that they suspect to be infested: the threat of disease, from *Ratus Norwegicus*, is very real. If, like Ms Matthews, you have children, it is all the more worrying.

However, we should all want compost heaps both to fortify the soil and to ease the pressure on state waste disposal systems. In Canada, the rat/compost heap problem is being faced with the production of wire mesh-encased compost bins although, if a rat is determined enough, it will gnaw through wire.

But one of the compost queens of this country, Pauline Pears of the Henry Doubleday Research Association, at Ryton Gardens in the Midlands, is more sanguine about rats' relationships with compost heaps. "At Ryton, we get rats on the compost heaps in the far fields where they are rarely disturbed, either by visitors or turning the heaps. Turning a compost heap regularly can help to keep rats away and it helps the heap to compost more quickly too," she says. For small urban gardens she recommends one of the compost tumblers now widely available, which are lidded plastic barrels mounted on a frame.

Worm composts are also a good bet. Once a worm composter of 80-100 litre capacity is working at full strength (this can take a few months of gentle feeding instead of chucking vast quantities of compost onto the poor animals, who will simply be overwhelmed), it should cope with kitchen waste from a family of four.

Ms Pears uses one given to her as a wedding present — it is wooden and well insulated, which gets round two of the problems posed by plastic worm composters. The first is that plastic bins tend to retain too much liquid, because the plastic sweats. This means that they need to be drained regularly or the worms may drown. Ms Pears' bin, on the other hand, allows the compost to retain its natural moisture, without a build-up of liquid.

The second problem with plastic bins is insulation. In extremely cold conditions the worms in plastic bins will hardly work.

Plastic containers probably have the advantage of being slightly more rat-proof than wood, though a really determined rat will simply gnaw through the plastic. However Clive Roberts, the director of the company that sells the Original Wormery, says that, after 100,000 worm bin sales, there has never been a rat attack of any kind reported.

Red-hot compost heaps will also deter rats. That means getting compost composting fast. Apart from the usual commercial compost accelerators, urine gets things moving.

● *Original Wormery, with a 94-litre capacity bin costs £49.90, including delivery anywhere on the mainland (01884 841515).*

GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q **Can you tell me if *Fremontia* and *Fremontodendron* are the same plant? I would like to get hold of the variety 'Californian Glory'.** — J. Bentley, Seaton, Devon.

A The accepted name for *Fremontia californica* is now *Fremontodendron californicum*. It is suitable as an evergreen wall-shrub in Britain, and lives for ten to 20 years. The flowers are a bright yellow, and are produced through the second half of the summer. The variety 'Californian Glory' is a hybrid with the smaller, more orange-yellow and less hardy species, *Fremontodendron mexicanum*, but the hybrid is hardier than both parents.

Fremontodendrons need planting small, in spring, because they resent root disturbance, and need a light soil. 'Californian Glory' is available by mail order from Burncoose and South Down Nurseries, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ (01209 861112).

Q **Last autumn, parts of my lawn failed to recover after the summer drought. The cause was an infestation of chafer grubs, which were present over the lawn, even in areas still green. I must now relay the lawn. How can I eradicate them completely first?** — J. Ford, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

A Garden chafer grubs are the white, C-shaped larvae of beetles, which hatch in summer, then in late summer/early autumn and spring eat the roots of turf grasses and other plants. In spring they are ready to pupate and then emerge as adult beetles. So laying a lawn in spring is not a problem, as the grubs should be pupating or flown. Soil preparation for laying a lawn may, however, provide the birds with a banquet. Chafer grubs are difficult to control with chemicals and, once you see the damage, it is usually too late.

HCH and pirimphos-methyl will kill the very young grubs when newly hatched, but would you want to treat a whole lawn? Better to spot treat if you see further activity again next summer.

Q **What red and green-leaved plants are best suited to topiary? I wish to make two lines of "red can" and "green cone" shaped navigational buoys across the vegetable patch.** — P. Hughes, Airmyn, Yorkshire.

A Red and evergreen is an impossible combination in this climate. But you could manage red and deciduous using the small *Berberis thunbergii* 'Atropurpurea Nana' (2ft x 2ft) or 'Helmond Pillar' (4ft x 1ft). You might manage something in a simple shape with the bushy purple plum, *Prunus cistena*, too (4ft x 4ft). Perhaps if evergreen foliage is vital you could plant some *Cordyline* 'Torbay Red'? You would get excellent contrast with clipped box or yew in between. Why not plant only the greens permanently, and bed out red coleus cones every summer, if you want a touch of the exotic?

● *Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.* The Times *regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.*

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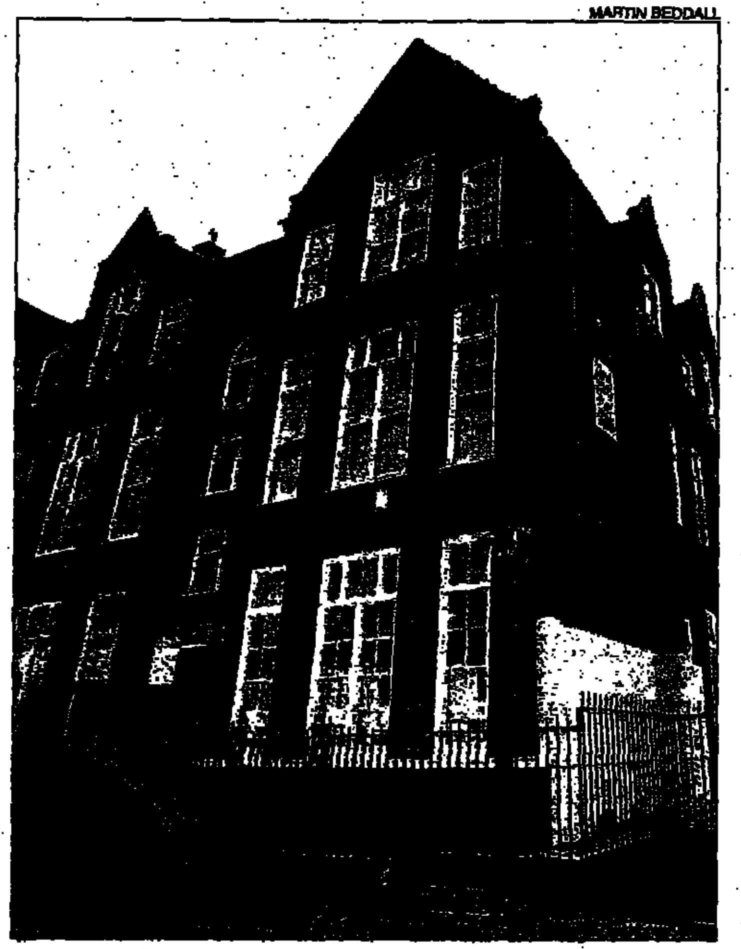
School rooms with real class

Once it was home to poor children, now it's called The Village and is a London pad for the wealthy


MARTIN BEDDALL

A corner of The Village apartments, once a London Board School

The whiff of chalk and the reek of carbolic soap have long since dispersed and its inhabitants are no longer schoolgirls in gymslips and pigtails. The Village, a converted school building in Battersea, south London, is now home to a group of glossy metropolitans, including a brace of minor royalty.

This former London Board School, built to provide space and light for Victorian children suffering from cramped and dingy conditions at home and at the child labour factories, now provides the same for, among others, Viscount Linley and his wife Serena, Michael Caine's daughter Natasha, and the Earl and Countess of Cawdor.

The list of residents has much to do with the selection process originally imposed by the owner of the development, Ashley Nicholson, and is reminiscent of the New York condominium vetting procedures of which the more rumbustious celebrities keep falling foul.

As Grant Slatter describes the building work that went into his home, Apartment 16a — this is definitely not a "flat" — it is plain to see why he impressed the magisterial developer with his enthusiasm. Not content with a tiny entrance hall, Mr Slatter re-modelled it, which involved digging down an extra 3ft. The result, which has a pristine white limestone floor you would be sorry to drop a bottle of red wine on, means that you walk down a short staircase on entering and immediately up a short staircase into the drawing room. "We wanted the feeling of making an entrance into this room," he says, "and the stairs allow that."

Not that the drawing room needs any help. At about 31ft by 21ft, with a soaring 14ft 6in ceiling and polished wooden floor, it has the feel of a church, an impression reinforced by a gallery at one end like an organ loft. This is not the property for you if you suffer from a fear of open spaces. Three full-length windows are framed by elaborately draped cream curtains. The man in charge of furnishing fabrics at the Peter Jones department store in Sloane Square asked Mr Slatter how big his house was, and found it difficult to believe it was a mere apartment.

The scale of the drawing room has required monumental pieces of furniture. A 6ft bay tree decorates a corner where others might place a niggardly yukka plant; the caryatids supporting the reproduction chimney piece are the size of small children; the stereo is ensconced in a towering Indian cabinet; convoluted dried flower arrangements made of moss and bare branches resembling exotic sea corals stand 10ft high where bowls of pot-pourri might languish. The Slatters admit that decorating such a large space is difficult, unless you like the spartan, uncluttered look. Never the less, they have managed to furnish it without making nonsense of the dimensions.

One trick they have employed is breaking up the expanses of wall space with a series of framed prints hung vertically in rows, although it would take the whole of *The Rake's Progress* to make any impression on this kind of expanse.

The other rooms have more intimate proportions. The kitchen has forgiving under-cabinet lighting that lends early morning pallor a rosy glow. The cooker has a handy barbecue gizmo, which is useful because there is no garden, only one small flower bed. The Slatters claim not to miss a garden — "We go to Battersea Park" — and some may feel that their airy living space compensates to an extent for this.

From the sofa in the upstairs gallery, with its delicate iron balustrade, Mr Slatter likes to admire the view, the urban equivalent of being master of all he surveys. A small bedroom shares this view through internal full-length windows. This is the baby's room and has a useful baby-sitting advantage in that his parents can keep an eye on him from the drawing room.

Above left: the high-ceilinged drawing room has the feel of a church, an impression reinforced by a gallery at one end like an organ loft.
Left: the ground-floor kitchen and breakfast room

The master bedroom and adjoining bathroom are well-decorated and uncluttered. There is plenty of storage space, including a wall of cupboards, for bundling unsightly objects out of the way.

The third bedroom is on the ground floor, and also has an en suite bathroom. The room doubles as a study for Mr Slatter, who works from home as an investor, but, he says, could be used as a smaller, cosier dining room. At present the Slatters use part of the drawing room for eating.

The couple bought the apartment before they had a baby and are planning to live in the country with their son. This is, however, a property that might have been developed with a child in mind. The insulation (the walls are 1½ feet thick) and the space (2,300 sq ft) render it noise-proof and play-friendly — it is not often one sees a large toy train track assembled on the floor without furniture pushed aside to accommodate it.

Original photographs of the school show Victorian children happily playing with hoops and toys, so I left the apartment with this small nod to the spirit of the building in mind.

KATHERINE BERGEN

● *Agent: Knight Frank (0171-629 8171)*

Above: Grant Slatter, the owner, by the full-length windows in the drawing room

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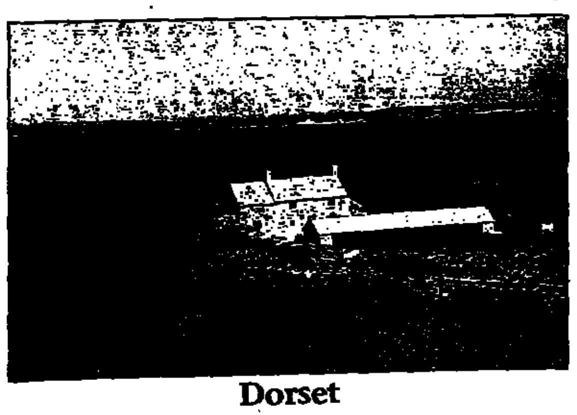

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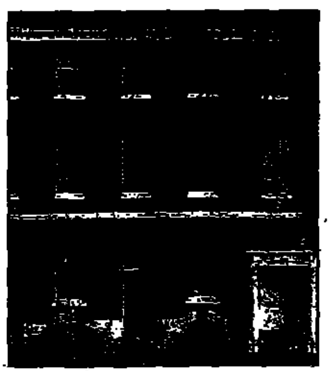

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LONDON
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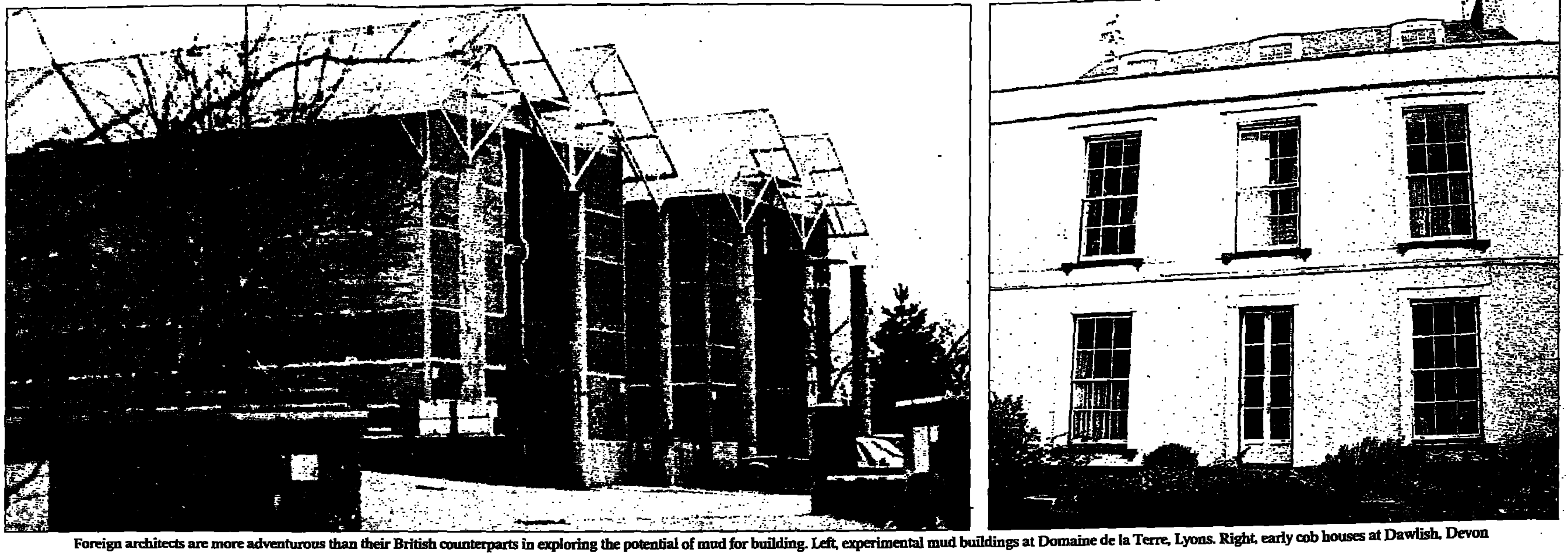
It may be the most basic of materials but it has a bright future in green building, says **Christine Webb**

LINDA WATSON



Foreign architects are more adventurous than their British counterparts in exploring the potential of mud for building. Left, experimental mud buildings at Domaine de la Terre, Lyons. Right, early cob houses at Dawlish, Devon

Mud, mud, glorious mud

If you think of mud only as something you scrape off your boots, think again — mud could have a glorious future as the green building material.

This is not as far-fetched as it might appear. Mud is usually available on site and, when used unbaked, the only energy exerted in its production is the muscle power to wield a spade and perfect the mix. And when the building is no longer needed, it can be returned to nature.

Yet, mud structures have impressively long lives. Many of our ancient character cottages are built from cob, a mixture of mud and straw, and some date from more than 500 years ago. Few of us realise that there are at least 170,000 earth structures in Britain, while an estimated 30 per cent of the rest of the world's population live in mud dwellings. Some in the Yemen are ten storeys high.

A couple of traditional British mud buildings have been re-created recently as "one-offs," but enthusiasts are promoting mud's potential, and say it could lend new form to modern architecture because it can be moulded into sweeping curves, lending fluidity to the architect's pen.

Linda Watson, of the Centre for Earthen Architecture at the University of Plymouth, believes we could be at the dawn of a British renaissance. "This country has inherited a rich legacy of earth buildings," she says. "There are an estimated 40,000 earth structures in Devon alone, and buildings also survive in Lincolnshire, Scotland, Wales, Ulster, East Anglia, Cornwall, Dorset, and Hampshire. British designers are finally starting to recognise that earth has a great potential."

But, she warns, Britain lags behind other countries which are exploring this potential, including Australia, the southern states of America, Germany, Switzerland and France, where an experimental village of 35 houses, Domaine de la Terre, was built near Lyons. Four years ago, Plymouth University's School of Architecture started a comprehensive research programme, testing the strength of earth building and developing a technical understanding of the material.

There are three main forms of earth construction: rammed earth or *pisé de terre*, cob, and earth blocks (wattle and daub uses earth but is not load-bearing). All three methods need protection from rain, which would carry the mud away. The walls are usually protected by a lime mortar and lime wash, and by a heavily overhanging roof, traditionally thatched.

Cob is a combination of straw, water and sub-soil, though some swear by adding cow dung to help the clay bind. It is layered wet onto a stone plinth then pared back after a few days before the next layer is added. Rammed earth, which was "modernised" for the construction industry by the French in the 1980s, is an almost-dry mix of earth, gravel and clay poured into the gap between two sheets of shuttering, and compressed by ramming.

Earth blocks are made by pouring a mixture into moulds. The blocks are then bound to each other by a clay mortar. After 1800, this method was widely used in East Anglia, where it was known as clay lump. For 100 years it was the principal walling material for buildings in parts of Norfolk and was used to build Norfolk's first council houses in the 1920s.

There are signs of a revival in earth building. One innovative firm of architects, Fielden Clegg of Bath, is using earth to build the front wall of the Earth Centre, Doncaster, an exhibition complex being built with millennium fund money. One reason for mud's slow re-emergence was the introduction of strict building regulations, which were not designed with earth in mind. But Alan Stokes, a building surveyor in Exeter, has gained building regulation type approval, and a clay lump house has had approval in East Anglia (see box).

Mr Stokes worked out the building costs to be £153.80 per metre for the earth walling compared with £274.98 for traditional materials, assuming the earth cost £4.50 per ton. If earth was available on site, the cost would be £136.74. He also undertook market research in the West Country, where people are aware of cob houses, and found that 74 per cent of respondents said they would buy a new earth dwelling. He chose *pisé de terre* as the most commercial build form, adding: "People would need educating to wipe out the public conception of living in a mud hut."

John Hurd, chairman of the International Council on Monuments and Sites earth structures committee, and a consultant for earth buildings, is convinced of earth's viability. "New building in earth is about to break in the UK," he says. "It's been happening elsewhere and we've been behind because our building rules have been misinformed in terms of thermal performance. But a mud wall has a storage heater effect: it heats up during the day and releases that warmth into the house at night. Mud will be an important form of building in the future."

One serious drawback for new mud dwellings has been the reluctance of building societies to lend on them. But the Ecology Building Society, which supports sustainable building technology, says it would consider lending on any earth building that satisfied the building regulations.

Builder Kevin McCabe, who has converted a three-sided agricultural shelter near Honiton, Devon, into his own cob home, plans to build a modern cob house. He has specialised in repairs or extensions for cob buildings since realising how much damage was being done by builders who used modern methods and materials.

"The problems of using cement to repair or render a mud wall might not appear for 50 years," he says. "Different methods are needed. It's a very economical material. But the beauty of cob is that it's hand-moulded and that's why cob cottages look so right in their environment. You can put the openings where they feel right, you don't have to have them all on a course of blocks. You can even sculpt with it. We've just moulded a life-size Dexter cow into the wall of a new extension for a client."

Linda Watson fears the profit motive prevents British builders considering earth construction, even though it is cheaper, because a building's walls are only a small percentage of the whole build cost. She says: "But if Britain grasps the nettle and supports environmentally sound building, the day of earth building will arrive."

● *The Ecology Building Society: 0345 697758. Centre for Earthen Architecture: 01752 233630. The Devon Earth Building Association's leaflet,* Cob and the 1991 Building Regulations, *is available for £1.40 from Peter Child, Environment Department, Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QW.*

DRAWN TO THE LAND

Using moulds to make brick-like clay lumps (left) for a cottage extension in Suffolk (right)

ALAN STOKES, a building surveyor in Exeter, broke new ground in mud building by getting building regulation approval for an unbaked earth house he called the "Chiverstone", paving the way for similar houses to be built elsewhere.

Mr Stokes, a building control officer for Exeter City Council, applied for Local Authority National Type Approval (Lantac) for his house, designed in *pisé de terre* (rammed earth), as part of his thesis for a degree in building surveying at the University of Glamorgan.

And Dirk Bouwens, of West Harling, Norwich, another building surveyor, recently won qualified approval from Breckland District Council, Norfolk, for a conventional-looking house built in unbaked clay blocks.

All new buildings must meet building regulations which, unlike planning regulations, ensure a structure is safe and satisfies minimum standards, for example of sound proofing and insulation. Mr Bouwens' type approval certificate means he, or a house-builder, could submit the Chiverstone plans throughout England and Wales without the need for further examination to gain building regulations approval. His design has provoked some interest from local builders, but so far has not left the drawing board.

It would be built on a concrete foundation because he felt that was the most commercially feasible method. Metal shutterings are then erected, and earth is rammed between them to build up the walls 500mm thick.

But Mr Bouwens' house has rubble foundations, which are traditional, and the detail of his house shows how it can be done. "The clay comes out of the ground at a certain density, you remove large stones, mix it with water, add straw and ram it into a mould. The harder you ram it, the greater the density," he explains. "You make a mortar out of clay and stick the blocks together. Traditionally the lumps are nine inches by six inches by 18 inches and weigh 25kg each, but you can make them any size you like. If you have them bigger than that people complain about lifting them. It's important the earth mix is right. It just happens that East Anglian earth has been ready-mixed by glacier."

David Fitt, Breckland council's head of building control, says there were two sticking points to watch out for if this house was built — the U value of the walls and their sound resistance, which could only be tested if the house was built. For that reason the approval given was qualified.

BUT the U value, a measure of thermal resistance, could be changed during construction if necessary by lining the walls with thermal boarding, or by making the walls denser, which would also increase sound insulation, Mr Bouwens says.

"The principal problem facing the procurement of *pisé de terre* dwellings is the unwillingness of builders to build them," Mr Stokes says. "The burden for relaunching unbaked earth buildings in the UK rests with the Government. They have the resources, capability and the social responsibility for ensuring a transformation in building."

SELLING POINTS

SHOWERS

Estate agents love them. Even conservationists give them the thumbs up. Americans cannot understand the fuss. To them, they are a basic life requirement.

Showers are a relative newcomer to the British bathroom. By tradition, we are a nation of bathers. But more than half of British homes have a shower, and the number is increasing. Recent research shows that the bathroom has displaced the kitchen in the show-off stakes; along with the living room, it is the room most often displayed to visitors.

Showers have come a long way from the trickle of the hastily-installed en suite variety. Thermostatic controls, power pumps, massage options and fancy Victorian heads mean showers can enhance a property's value. They are also quick and convenient. Families can be processed through the bathroom more speedily at peak times. Using only a third of the water and heat of a bath, showers are also economical — a valuable point if a house is water metered.

The most common and cheapest are electric showers, requiring only a direct feed from the mains and an (isolated) electricity supply. Mixer showers draw water from the household hot and cold water supplies and give a higher flow rate than electric. Power showers (the most expensive) are mixer showers with a pump to boost the pressure.

The shower you choose is often limited by its location. Adding a shower to the bathroom allows the widest choice because the plumbing is already in place. But check your hot water supply. If this is poor or there are heavy household demands, you may be restricted to an electric shower. Thermostatic or pressure balanced showers prevent sudden temperature and pressure changes when there is a flurry of lavatory flushing or tap running elsewhere in the house.

A separate shower room, although more costly, can provide the most benefits in the long run — and you gain a second bathroom for guests or children. Provided you have access to drains and water supply, and you can accept the installation disruption, showers can be fitted in the most surprising places — under the stairs, utility rooms, walk-in wardrobes, downstairs cloakrooms, corners of bedrooms, attics and basements. (I know of one in the middle of a living room but this is not advisable unless you have an attractive shower cubicle.)

A standard cubicle measures 700mm by 700mm. For comfort, you should allow the same area again for space to dry. Mixer showers, which draw cold water from the loft cistern, need a minimum head of water — between 600m and 1,000m — so are unsuitable for attics. Windowless rooms may also need an extractor fan.

Electric showers start as cheap as £50, mixers and power showers from £250, while £500 will get you power and sophistication. Installation costs will depend on accessibility but are likely to be several hundred pounds.

Do not skimp on shower doors and panels (£200-£400). Cheap plastic will bend and leak. Power showers, in particular, need well-sealed units.

HELEN PICKLES

UPI/CORBIS BETTMANN

Showers have come a long way from the trickle of the early varieties

PROPERTY NEWS

■ PROPERTY prices are probably the last thing on a prospective Labour MP's mind at the moment but, according to agents Dauntons in Pimlico, central London, they may be in for a shock. Property prices and rentals around Westminster have almost tripled since Labour was last in government, and there are few properties to be had. Dauntons estimates that a Pimlico pied-à-terre would sell for £89,000 today — nearly £60,000 more than in May 1979.

■ COUNTRY house prices in Hampshire continue to rise, according to agents John D. Wood, with many exceeding prices last seen in the late 1980s. Demand from London buyers, and lack of suitable properties, means prices of period family houses over £350,000 have increased by 5 per cent to 10 per cent since January this year.

■ FAITHLEGG House, near Waterford, southeast Ireland, is for sale by tender through Hamilton Osborne King on April 24. Built in 1783 by Cornelius Brown MP, the estate now includes a championship golf course and club house, and development land. It is for sale as a whole or in lots. Details from Hamilton Osbourne King on 00 353 1 6760251.

■ ONE-BEDROOM period flats in South Kensington, London are being snapped up by affluent young professionals, according to Peter Rollings at agents Foxtons. A flat valued at £160,000 in January 1995 came onto the market at £220,000 at the end of last month, and within a week had five offers meeting the asking price.

AMANDA LOOSE

NORTH OF THE THAMES

ALEXANDER ST. W2. Superb 1 bed flt on rgf excel res locn, prd ftrs, spac recep, kit, shwr rm, low o/goings. £175,000. Granvilles 0171 221 4935.

BARGAINS. Repossessions and Reduced for quick sale props. Capital Property Lists 7 days 10am-10pm 0171 833 1104.

BLOMFIELD VILLAS W2 Delightful 3 bed apt on 2nd flr of period prop. £185,000 Leasehold. Cass 0171 286 5757.

CHISWICK Heathfield Gardens 4 bed semi detached freehold house. Double reception, kitchen, dining room, 2 bathrooms, 100 ft garden. Off street parking. Full Gas CH. In need of some updating. OIEO £355,000. Please call 0181 742 9811

CHISWICK 1st floor conversion flat in quiet road. Living room, fire place, modern kit, dbl bedroom, white bathroom, long lease, no chain. £79,950 Allan Briegal 0181 780 0077.

HARROW ROAD W9 2 bed 1st flr flat with ensuite. £89,950 L/hold. Cass 0171 286 5757

HEREFORD ROAD W2. 1 bed flt on 2nd flr, west fac tf terr, recep, o/plan kit, bath. £142,000. Granvilles 0171 221 4935.

LITTLE VENICE/Maida Vale. The specialist local agents. Vickers & Co 0171 289 1692

MAIDA VALE Bright and spacious one bedroom apartment in period conversion. Newly refurbished £109,950 call Pembertons on 0171 586 5999

MARYLEBONE, NW1. Large 2 bed mansion flat nr tube. £132,500. Sandfords 0171 723 9988

MONTAGU MANSIONS, W1. Excellent 2/3 bed apt in period portered mansion blk. High ceilings & balcony. £325,000. Sandfords 0171 723 9988

MONTAGU SQ. 3 bed, 2 bath, clk, dble lounge, 2nd flr, lift, port. £360,000. Tel0171 724 9919

PENTHOUSE 3/4 bdrms, 2 bthrms, lge modern kitchen & morning room, lounge with roof terraces with panoramic views, underground carpark for 3 cars, lift, entry phone. 1700 sq ft (164 sq m), long lease, low charges, f/hold available. Wembley. £162,500. Stewart 0181 868 3932/fax 0181 429 2248

PRIME LONDON PROPERTY LIST. 3000 + for sale in W1 W2 W8 W9 W11 SW1 SW3 SW7 SW10 NW1 NW3 NW8 The whole prime London market at a glance. 3 months subscription £75 + pp. 0181 262 9000

RANDOLPH AVE W9 Spac 3 bed 2 receps 3 bath mais in prestigious street with gdn. £275,000 L/hold. Cass 0171 286 5757.

REPOSSESSIONS The Building Society Repossessions List. 1200+ flats and houses in London and the Home Counties 3 month subscription £59 + pp BSRL 0181 262 7788

STANHOPE PL W2 Lge lwr gnd flr flat (1270 sq ft) with good light nr Hyde Pk. 3 beds, 2 baths, rec (20'8 x 14'4), din hall, kit, storage, patio, ind CH, caretaker. Lse 42 yrs. £260,000 BCP 0171 584 3399.

ST JOHNS WD. NW8. Bright 2 bedrm 1st flr conversion, high ceilings. Sh. of F/H. £186,000. Sandfords 0171 723 9988

WARLOCK RD W9 3 bed gnd flr mais with garden. £166,000 L/H. Cass 0171 286 5757.

W2 Bright & spac 3 bed top flr mais in period bldg £225,000 Westways 0171 792 2167.

W2 Bright & spac 2 bed split level flat in mod pbb. £159,950 Westways 0171 792 2167.

WESTBOURNE TERRACE W2. 2 bed flat, 2nd floor period building £185,000. 0171 724 9919

W2 Spac split level 2 bed in mod pbb with potential. £169,950 Westways 0171 792 2167

W2/W11 Urgent appeal to all vendors. We are selling more than we can replace. Please call Westways 0171 792 2167.

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

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CAMBERWELL GROVE £250,000. Artist's Georgian in prestigious Ave. 95 beds 0171 277 2826.

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BLOOMSBURY WC1. 1 bed lg flat, small patio. £74,000 STC Winkworth 0171 240 3322

BLOOMSBURY WC1. 1 bed lg flat, small patio. £74,000 STC Winkworth 0171 240 3322

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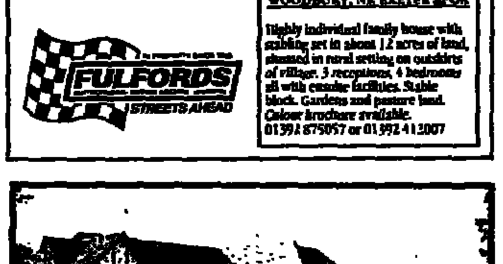

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ODIHAM HANTS (M3 J5 2 miles) Period 4 bed 3 bath, furn with antiques, open fires, Aga. Gdn. £1,500 pcm. 01252 842795

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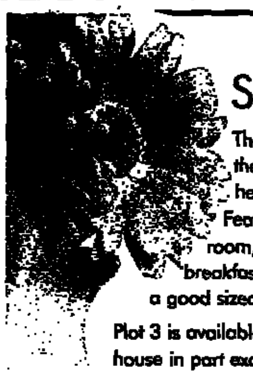
NEW HOMES



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Plot 3 is available now and we may be able to take your existing house in part exchange*.
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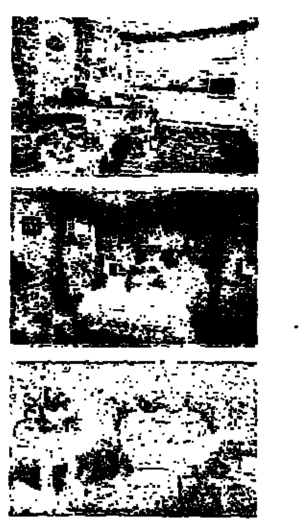

*part exchange subject to status, terms and conditions

Typical Sussex photographs

THE TIMES

HOUSE TO SELL? RING THE TIMES 0171 481 4000

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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FOR SALE

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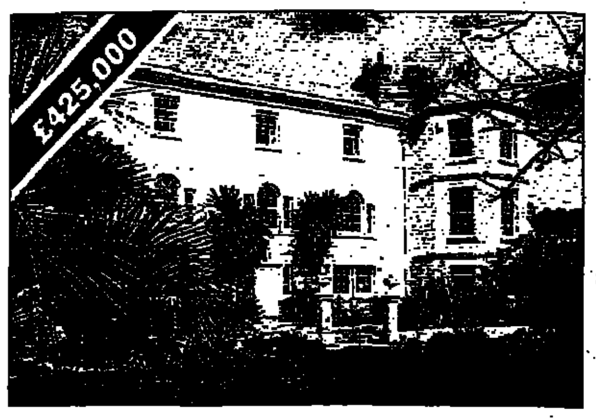
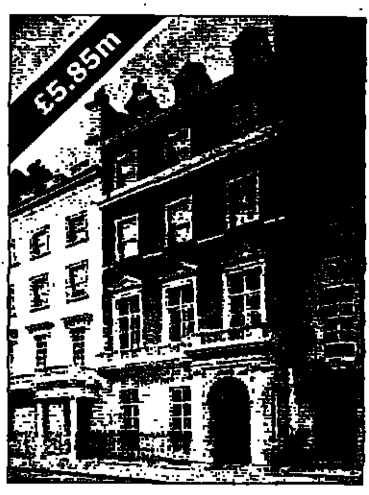


CORNWALL
Chy An Eglos, Marazion. Georgian Grade II listed village house with views to the sea and St. Michaels Mount, in lushly landscaped gardens with a bathing pavilion and a 12.5 metre indoor heated pool surrounded by tropical plants. Seven bedrooms, three bathrooms (two ensuite), four reception rooms, playroom, fitted kitchen, flower room and laundry room. Garage, outbuildings. About £425,000 (Knight Frank, 01392 432111)



LONDON
20, Upper Brook Street, Mayfair W1. *Restored six storey* Georgian house with a split level Italianate garden and a 36ft indoor swimming pool, with counter current jet and a gymnasium area. Five bedrooms (all with ensuite baths), four *reception rooms, lift,* kitchen, two staff bedrooms and bathrooms, chauffeurs flat, garage and mews parking. About £5.85m for a 101 year lease (Wetherell, 0171 493 6935 and De Groot Collis 0171 *235 6090*)

MIDDLESEX
Recently renovated house in a third of an acre garden with an indoor swimming pool complex, including a 36ft heated pool, Jacuzzi, shower-room and sauna. Six bedrooms, five bathrooms (four ensuite), maids room, four reception rooms, 30ft billiard room, luxury fitted kitchen/breakfast room and butlers pantry. Barbecue house and double garage. About £1.2m (Knight Frank, 0171 824 8171)

CHERYL TAYLOR

Forget foreign holidays – more people are staying at home and renting a little house in the country

A cottage industry at its best

DES JENSON

Jenny Burr at Fowlers Cottage. "I hated the idea of renting at first but now I hate it when it's empty"

More and more people are doing it — last year was a good year and on early indications, 1997 looks set to be pretty busy. Taking a short break or summer holiday in a self-catering cottage is increasingly popular. Whereas once the idea of a "holiday home" conjured up thoughts of damp and rather spartan accommodation, there has been a move upmarket to provide a home from home, so now you get roses round the door and all mod cons.

The choice is diverse ranging from thatched cottages to castles and quaint seaside homes to country houses with swimming pools. Simon Tregoning, one of the partners in Classic Cottages, a Cornish-based company whose bookings leapt by 18 per cent last year, says: "There is a sway against being packaged abroad and people are looking at taking a holiday in their own country."

> There is a sway against being packaged abroad

If you have an attractive village or country property — whether acquired as an investment, inherited from a great aunt, or a weekend retreat that is no longer much used — it could well prove a valuable asset as a holiday cottage.

On top of the income that can be generated from letting the property, there are a number of significant tax advantages worth exploring if you plan to turn your second home into a small holiday business.

And if you're thinking about letting the house or cottage through a specialist holiday company, now is the time to contact them as many are assessing new properties for inclusion in their 1998 brochures that will be launched this autumn.

Using a holiday letting company relieves owners of advertising the property, arranging bookings and dealing with payments. But what you cannot hand over is the responsibility for cleaning up between guests and keeping the property up to scratch.

If you want your cottage accepted by one of the glossier, more upmarket letting companies be prepared for a thorough vetting and having to spend some money on fixtures and fittings to meet high standards. Some will present owners with a daunting list of requirements so you can forget about palming off that old swirly carpet for the sitting room or some dated crockery for the kitchen.

Nick House, managing director of the selective Rural Retreats letting group, rejects four out of five properties he looks at, while Leonard Rees, who runs Quality Cottages in Wales, says that of 360 houses he was offered last year, he took only 36.

"We used to put old things into rented houses and buy new for our own. Now we buy new for *the cottage and we keep* the old," says Jenny Burr, owner of Fowlers Cottage in Sussex, a picturesque beamed house that dates from the 15th century. At the peak of the holiday season it costs £465 a week to book Fowlers.

Mrs Burr has rented out Fowlers for ten years through English Country Cottages. "I knew it would let easily but I loathed the idea to start with. Now I don't like it if it is empty," she says. She would not contemplate managing the lettings herself. "I would never get the bookings and could not afford to advertise. This way we also avoid the hassle of handling deposits and payments."

With the increased popularity of short winter breaks and new year bookings, a holiday cottage can earn *its keep year-round, especially if it is* in one of the honeypot areas such as the Cotswolds or the West Country. Last year English Country Cottages, one of the largest companies in the market, reported a 20 per cent increase in winter season bookings.

Commission charged by letting *agents varies. English Country Cot*tages charges commission of 25 per cent on the total rental price while Classic Cottages, with 320 properties across Devon and Cornwall, charges 23.5 per cent. Quality Cottages, which has around 150 properties along the Welsh coastline, charges 30.5 per cent. Rural Retreats charges a heftier 33 per cent rising to 48 per cent, though this includes property management — cleaning and replenishing food hampers and toiletries that are standard in all the houses.

On top of commission charges, the letting company will also levy an annual or one-off registration fee of around £100. Other costs include public liability insurance for the property, which will mean a slightly higher premium than usual for buildings and contents insurance.

One benefit for owners who use a letting company is that they are less likely to lose out if a booking is *cancelled and will receive between* 75 and 100 per cent of the income for the period concerned.

Advertising in a glossy brochure alongside a lot of other attractive houses may not appeal to all, not least because your house, however charming, is up against stiff opposition from other properties.

Fowlers Cottage in Sussex costs £465 a week to rent in peak season

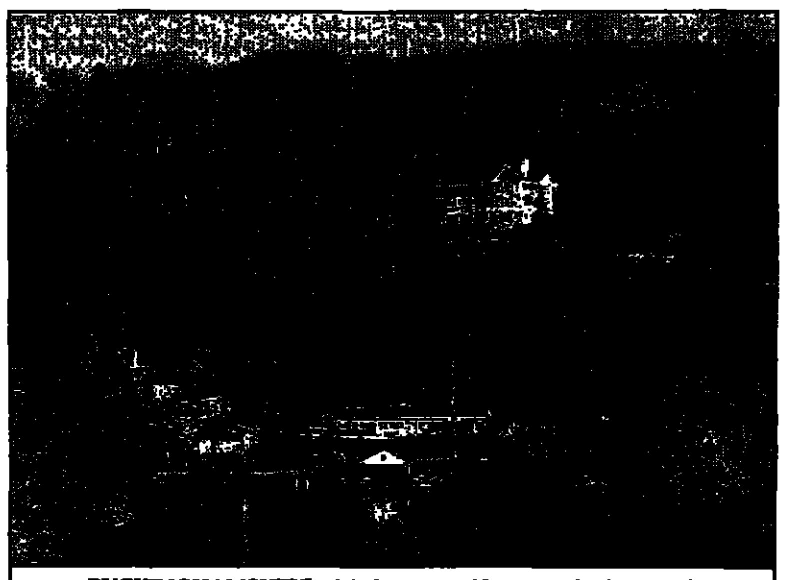
Putting an ad with a photo in the post office window may offer greater exclusivity but a probable viewing public of three men and a dog. Many holiday companies advertise and market their brochures widely and groups such as English Country Cottages also sell their brochures *through branches of WH Smith and* Sainsbury's.

In addition, many of the holiday companies are tapping into the growing demand from customers outside the UK, marketing properties through agencies in the US and Europe. Classic Cottages and Rural *Retreats estimate that 10 per cent of* their bookings come from customers abroad.

If you do decide to sign up, don't start planning your retirement straight away. Many houses take a couple of years to reach their peak helped by repeat bookings and *recommendations from previous satisfied customers.*

CLARE STEWART

● *Quality Cottages, 01348 837874. English Country Cottages (also for Wales, Scotland and Ireland), 01328 864292. Classic Cottages, 01326 565656. Rural Retreats, 01386 701177.*



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE – Marlow **About 2.92 ha (7.2 acres)**
An impressive country house in a commanding hillside setting with extensive views to the west over the Thames. 4 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, recep hall, 2 receps, kit, b'fast rm, garden rm, studio, further kit & bath, dble garage, swimming pool, terraced gardens, woodland.
OXFORD: 01865 311522 **HEAD OFFICE: 0171-493 4106**

RIVER HOUSE, W6

A charming late 17th/early 18th century house with commanding southerly views of the Thames and a 48.75m (160ft) garden.

5 bedrooms,
2 dressing rooms,
3 bathrooms,
3 reception rooms,
kitchen, laundry room,
cloakroom,
off-street parking.

Freehold
Price Guide: £875,000

KENSINGTON:
0171-727 0705

CLOUDESDALE ROAD, SW17

On the Heaver Estate off Ritherdon Road, a charming house with a south west facing garden and possible loft conversion (subject to consents).

4 beds, bath, 2 receps, kitchen, utility rm, cellar, 2 lofts, garden.

Freehold
£235,000

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A classic William and Mary country house with later additions set in gardens of national repute.
7 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, reception hall, 5 reception rooms, integral 3 bedroom flat.
5 cottages, garages, outstanding gardens with paddock, arable and pasture land.
About 9.41 ha (23.5 acres).
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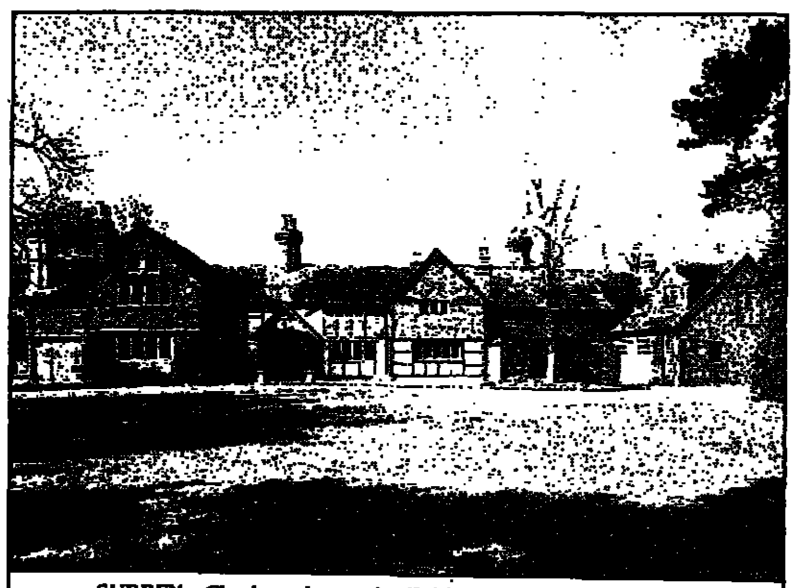


SURREY – Charlwood **Available as a whole or lot 1 only**
A Grade II* manor house on the edge of the village. Lot 1: 6 bed house, adjoining 2 bed cottage, gdn, grass tennis ct, swim pool, about 1.49 ha (3.7 acres).
Lot 2: barn, outbuildings, paddocks, about 6.27 ha (15.5 acres).
EAST GRINSTEAD: 01342 326326 **HEAD OFFICE: 0171-493 4106**

SPRIMONT PLACE, Chelsea, SW3

In a wide sunny street between Sloane Avenue and Chelsea Green, a well-arranged house approached via pretty communal gardens.

3/4 bedrooms,
2 bathrooms,
2/3 reception rooms,
kitchen, cloakroom,
small private garden,
2 communal gardens.
Underground parking available to rent.

Freehold
£695,000

CHELSEA:
0171-352 1484

هكذا من الاعلى

NORTH SOMERSET,
Clapton in Gordano
Bristol 8 miles

An appealing house on a prestigious private road.

5/7 beds, dressing rm,
4 baths, recep hall,
3/5 receps, kitchen,
large playrm,
dble garage,
office, outbuildings,
gardens & grounds.
About 2.02 ha (5 acres).

Price Guide:
£700,00

CIRENCESTER:
01285 642244

Martin Bell, the 'white knight' and son of a farmer/writer, would do well to heed his father's words as the electioneering mud flies

Beware of the Tatton turnips

DOWN TO EARTH

PAUL HEINEY

If you watched Martin Bell, the television war reporter turned frightened white mouse, as the press grilled him on his election intentions in Tatton, you might wonder why he was doing it. Why should an individual as clearly possessed of a rational mind as Bell throw himself unarmed into a fight he can never win, whatever the outcome? If he gains the seat, he will be lumbered with a parliamentary career he does not want; if he loses he will never be allowed to live it down. Poor Martin; it's all a long way from the comparative peace of his father's Suffolk farm.

Forgive any attempts at amateur psychology, but for an explanation of recent events in his life — "there are some things in life that you don't enjoy doing, but sometimes like having done; I think it might turn out to be one of those" — the temptation is to examine the blood that flows through Martin Bell, a few drops of which famously remain in Bosnia.

His late father, Adrian Bell, has been an inspiration to me, and to readers of rural literature of the middle years of this century. He worked his small East Anglian farm at a time when a flood of writers were answering an irresistible call to the land. Among them was Henry Williamson, who farmed in Norfolk, and the literary critic and philosopher John Middleton Murray, whose distinguished work, *The Conquest of Death*, may be great reading for some, but for me there are more laughs in his *Community Farm*, an account of an idealistic attempt at socialist farming. It foundered, incidentally, when his idle fellow workers found that no amount of socialist thought could make light of the filthy business of harvesting roots in a wet October. Marx and mangelwurzels did not mix.

I have heard it said that this remarkable trio of farmer/writers, Bell (who also compiled crosswords for *The Times* while driving his Fordson tractor), Williamson and Middleton Murray, would generally meet at Beccles livestock market. Oh, to have been a blowfly buzzing around the cattle ring as these three minds mulled over the philosophy of farming or, more likely, cow prices.

I have no idea whether Martin Bell enjoyed his childhood on the farm, and having once mentioned it briefly I did not get a response as from a man for whom a rural upbringing counted for much. It worried me, because I, too, have farmed and written with a family tumbling along in the boiling agricultural wake, and am now beginning to wonder exactly which sins of the father will eventually be visited on the children. Martin Bell may be asking himself a similar question, if "sometimes we have to get off our backsides and help people" can be seen as the visitation of a parental sin.

Reading Adrian Bell's *The Budding Morrow*, a vivid personal account of wartime farming, despite its twee title, it is clear that Bell Sr, like son, was a torn man: "Even in the engrossing task of writing; if I had composed a sonnet to rank with Shakespeare's, and it was running through my head, and I saw Strawberry looking into a dry water trough, I should have to risk forgetting it to carry a pail to the cow."

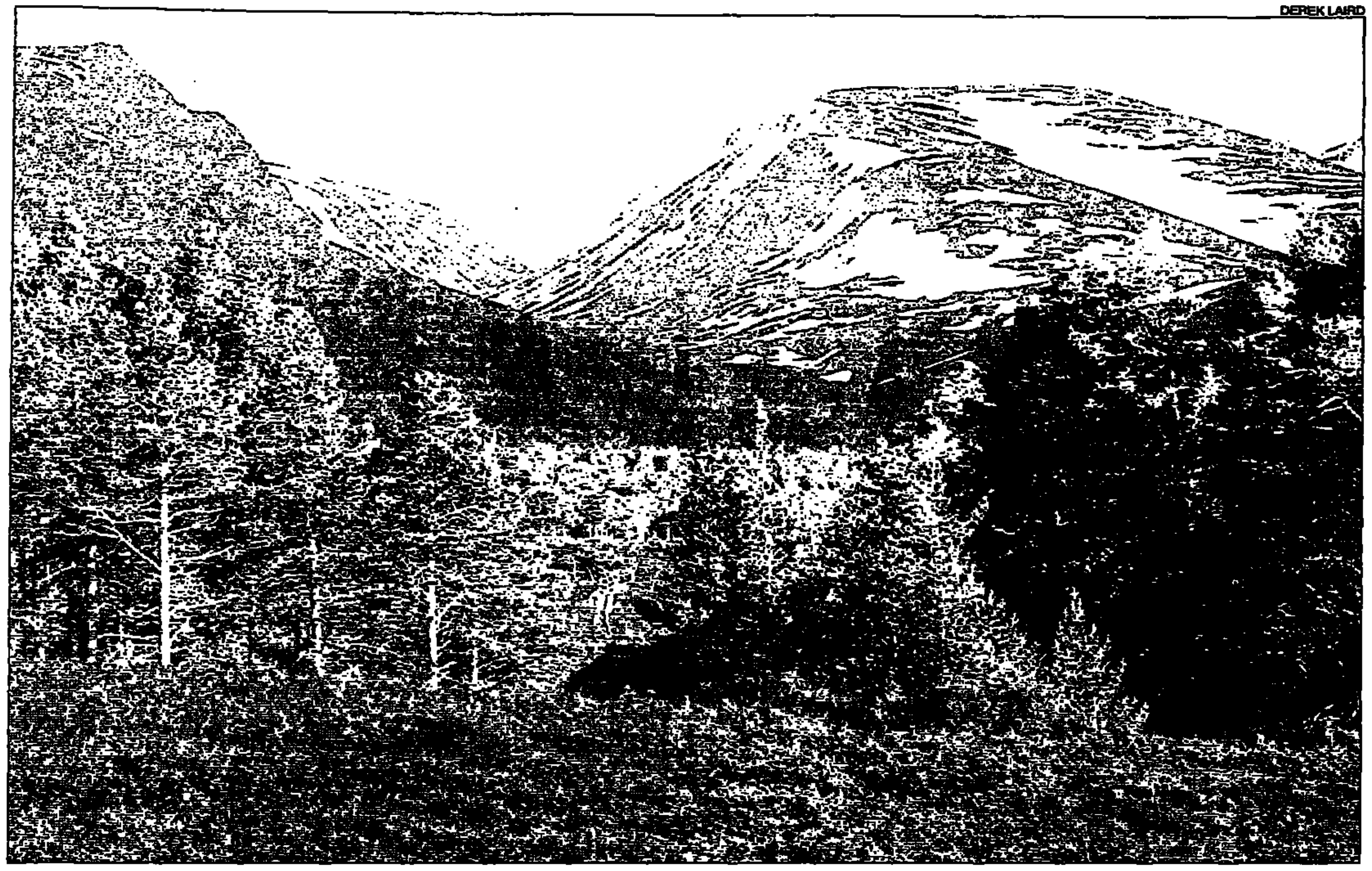
It should come as no surprise that a man who would not rank his own creative powers above the brief thirst of a cow, should sire a principled son who would say that "I could think of lots of reasons for saying this is none of my business..." and then, through determination to do the right thing, stick his neck so far out as to be in grave risk of decapitation.

There may be simpler reasons. We are told by Bell Sr: "I send Martin across to take the apple that is slowly being brought forth, not from either pocket this time, but from under his hat. Martin is expectant, not knowing quite what Mr Merry is fumbling after in that old relic. 'Father.' He comes running after me. 'Mr Merry had an apple in his hat.' Martin bites into the apple. A thought strikes me: a mental picture of the inside of that hat. 'Martin,' I call, 'here a minute.' But he has already taken three more bites. I'll not tell his mother."

As a self-confessed "hopeless romantic", was it always intended that Martin Bell should take a bite of any tempting apple, even the poisoned one in Tatton?

I wish him well: he is an intelligent man capable of ploughing deep furrows who will have great difficulty in the thin soils of politics. Doubtless it will be a ride as bumpy as any his father experienced on a tractor. There will be much mud slung in the next few weeks and, if it is any help to the younger Bell, it might be in the words of his father, who wrote after a muddy day's work pulling turnips: "I take no responsibility for the children beyond their bodily safety. 'Nothing will clean you,' I tell them, 'but the mangel-scraper.' Anyhow, mud is comparative. A speck or two can be a tragedy on some occasions: when you are splashed from head to foot you forget about it. It is very unpleasant at the beginning. A thorough baptism is the only thing; complete immersion, and that comes soon enough. Thereafter one flops straight through anything." Tread carefully through the turnips, Martin.

DEREK LAIRD



The wilderness-like Cairngorms, scene of a bitter battle between the promoters of a mountain funicular railway and environmental groups

Fast track to conflict

In the Cairngorms, a funicular railway for skiers has been given the go-ahead, to the fury of environmentalists. Here we outline the two sides of a dispute with a much wider resonance

Plans for a funicular railway hauled by cable along a 6ft-wide zip up the front of Cairn Gorm mountain outraged some environmentalists, but now the scheme has the blessing of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the Government agency and arbiter on Scottish environmental issues. Supporters insist this should allow the project to proceed without a costly and delaying public inquiry.

Earlier objections by SNH were withdrawn after reaching a legally binding agreement with the developer, Cairngorm Chairlift Company; the landowner, Highland and Islands Enterprise; and the planning authority, Highland Council. The Section 50 agreement should ensure that the natural heritage of Cairngorm and the sensitive areas close to the funicular track are safeguarded. The railway, costing more than £17 million, will replace the chairlift, which has taken skiers and summer visitors up the mountain for the past 36 years and has reached the end of its lifespan.

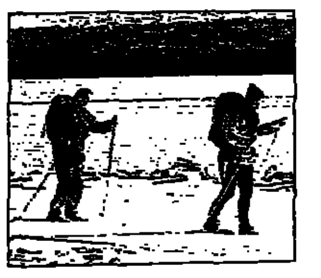
After considering the alternatives and having lengthy negotiations with groups involved, the lift company opted for the funicular. It says this will whisk 1,200 skiers an hour up the mountain, more than double the present maximum. The trip will take four and a half minutes, against the 17 minutes taken by the present chairlift, and the railway, with its two-metre wide track, will be less vulnerable to the high winds that can sweep the face of Cairn Gorm. In summer, the funicular will be fitted with seats and cruise more slowly along its tracks to give visitors more of a "Highland experience".

The ski area occupies 1 per cent of Cairngorm's 167,500 acres and has an established network of 17 lifts and tows, used by up to 200,000 skiers in winter. About 50,000 visitors use the chairlift in summer, and the system helps underpin 2,500 tourism jobs in Speyside, where the lift company is the area's second largest employer.

Now the environmental battle has been won, in the view of the scheme's supporters, the cost and viability of building the funicular will most likely be brought into question. The estimate of £16.5 million made about three years ago seems likely to have increased towards £18 million. The promoters, supported by the Scottish Sports Council, Scottish Tourist Board, Scottish Civic Trust and local organisations, are happy with the sums and convinced the scheme is necessary and viable. They claim cross-party support, so even a change of government should not jeopardise their expectations.

Approaches are now being made to private and public sources in Britain and Europe to fund the funicular, with the aim of starting work in spring 1998.

The developers say disturbance will be kept to a minimum during construction, with helicopters used to transport materials and any disturbed ground reinstated. But the rift remains with those who object to the crowds, machinery and erosion that development inevitably attracts to sensitive wilderness areas. The thousands who enjoy skiing believe that when development is concentrated in one, relatively small area it is a price worth paying.



'The funicular will give visitors a Highland experience'

Roger Crofts, the chief executive of Scottish Natural Heritage, said the deal was legally enforceable and met Government obligations under the EC habitats directive.

The claimed "better alternative" of a Glenmore Gondola, proposed by the RSPB, the National Trust for Scotland and other objectors, was rejected as flawed by the chairlift company. It says the scheme would be more environmentally intrusive, on land notified by SNH as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It would also affect part of the mountain where there was no skiing. More significantly, the gondola plan would not prevent passengers walking from the top station out on to the sensitive areas that need protection.

The funicular railway would rise more than 1,400ft from the present car park, via a new middle station with a new restaurant, to the Ptarmigan top station beneath the 4,084ft summit of Cairn Gorm. The final 800ft would be through a tunnel, avoiding the funicular breaking the skyline.

At the Ptarmigan, a second, 250-seat restaurant is planned, with an interpretive centre giving visitors an insight into the history and ecology of the Cairngorms and, on a fine day, superb views across Speyside.

The scheme's supporters say it is crucially important that the Ptarmigan would have no summertime exit for visitors. Only the emergency services would have easy access to the sensitive plateau area. Anyone wanting to climb Cairn Gorm would have to start at the bottom — on foot.

RONALD FAUX

It is the simplest of issues, but bureaucrats have strewn its path with reports: politicians, councillors and other vested interests have sought to layer it with complexities; even the conservation lobby was deluded into campaigning for a lesser evil, a gondola instead of a funicular railway, on the grounds that it would lessen the impact of skiing.

I don't buy any of it. I acknowledge only this fundamental: is the landscape of the Cairngorms worthy of our highest conservation endeavours, given that its vast Arctic-Alpine bulk is the one massif in our country deserving of the accolade "unique"?

I align myself with overwhelming international scientific and conservation opinion which has answered yes to that question and urged us to treat the Cairngorms accordingly. If you believe that, then skiing can play no part. No funicular, no gondola, no car parks, roads, building. Nothing.

The Arctic plateaux of the Cairngorms are the most fragile of environments: characteristic wildlife communities, like the dotterel breeding grounds, will be trampled underfoot, and possibly obliterated by skiing development.

A funicular railway is not a means of safeguarding the mountain; it is not even a means of improving the quality of the skiing; it is a means of making money out of tourism.

That Scottish Natural Heritage's (SNH) satisfaction with the funicular's revised arrangements for visitor management means one of two things: either it values tourism above the single most spectacularly natural piece of heritage in Scotland (in which case the SNH has no right to exist and should resign), or it is too enfeebled to fight. No other explanation seems credible. If the one agency charged with advising the Government on nature conservation cannot mount the longest, loudest defence of the Cairngorms, of all places, what is the point of it?

I am against all skiing in the Cairngorms. The landscape matters too much. It matters not because of what you or I can get out of it (and at its best its spiritual and physical rewards are mighty forces in the body of a susceptible mortal), but for its own sake.

The developers, even the Government which inflicted skiing on the Cairngorms in the first place through the Highlands and Islands Development Board, wheel out the jobs card. Yet it has always been a fickle and unreliable employer. You don't make a fortune in the Highlands when your enterprise is dependent on the weather.

Is there a better way? I think so, one which puts the landscape first, creates reliable jobs for all time, and could even save the face of SNH.

Suppose SNH is infiltrated by a more enlightened leadership than it enjoys, a passionately Scottish one as opposed to the passion-free and un-Scottish incumbents; true champions of a native landscape are the natives.

The first step freezes the funicular in its tracks. The second step is to commission one more study: the potential for employment in a nationally funded Cairngorms-wide programme of rolling conservation, a benchmark which would establish more commitment to the cause of nature conservation than we have ever dared to contemplate. In such an endeavour is also to be found the key which will unlock the regeneration of rural communities, without unflattering and slavish addiction to tourism.

'The wildlife communities will be trampled underfoot'

When this study demonstrates the undeniable long-term advantages for the Cairngorms landscape and its people, SNH goes back to the Government (a Scottish Parliament will have been in place for some time by now), points out past errors, and argues with the force and passion of which it will now be capable that skiing should be abandoned in the Cairngorms, that Cairn Gorm itself should be closed for 20 years while the mountain is restored and given time to heal, that the Scottish Parliament commits itself to a 100-year programme of management of the Cairngorms in which nature conservation will be the overriding concern.

A locally recruited workforce will be trained in every aspect of mountain and pinewood conservation, and have jobs for life if they want them, because continuity will be crucial to the enterprise.

So the landscape is in better heart, the communities round its fringes are in better heart and have a stake in the landscape's well-being. And people as a species have begun to look at the Cairngorms as an opportunity to put back something of what has been removed.

None of all this will happen unless we want it badly enough. That's all that stands in our way.

JIM CRUMLEY

Singing troglodytes

PETER BROWN

Male wrens build as many as five of their domed nests in different parts of their territory

FEATHER REPORT

THIS IS a busy month for male wrens. These tiny birds of the undergrowth are singing furiously to warn off other males from approaching their territory, and will face them defiantly with lifted, quivering wings if they come too near. Sometimes, two males will fight over a boundary, and you see them scrabbling and tumbling together down through the leaves.

In addition, the male wrens are building nests — often as many as five in different parts of their territory. They are substantial, domed nests of grass and moss, and are hidden in ivy, cracks in sheds, or in other camouflaged crevices. These nests are called cocks' nests, and are used to attract females.

If a female comes into his territory, a male wren will try to conduct her to one of the nests he has built, singing in order to lead her on. She will inspect it, and after that may remain with him as his mate. Later she may use the nest to lay her eggs.

Many male wrens remain monogamous after they have been accepted by a female, but some will end up with three or even four mates.

They are so preoccupied with all this business at present that it is easy to get close to them. They are not much more than three inches long, and when they have their tails cocked they look even shorter.

On a near view, you can see the fine barring on the rich, russet-brown feathers, the white throat, and the creamy stripe over the eye. The coat of feathers is thick and warm, and their legs are sturdy. When the birds are nervous they bob up and down, and when they sing the whole body seems to shake.

A FEMALE wren will lay as many as ten eggs in the nest, tiny white eggs with red spots. She will incubate them herself, and will not get much help from the male with feeding the young. The adults like eating beetles, but the young get smaller and softer insects. If the mother finds a beetle while foraging for the young she will swallow it herself.

It is an amusing sight when the young leave the nest, putting their heads out and streaming off one after the other. They hide together in a thick hedge at first, and during the few weeks before they become independent the male will sometimes feed them, especially if the female is starting to lay another clutch of eggs. However, some females find a new mate for their second brood, and then there is a game of musical chairs among the wrens in the neighbourhood.

There are many species of wren on the other side of the Atlantic, but our wren, whose scientific name is *troglodytes* or cave-dweller, is the only one found in Europe. It is very common indeed — in fact, it is probably the commonest bird in Britain, with perhaps seven million pairs nesting here. This often astonishes people, because it is a furtive bird and not so often noticed. But its rapid, vibrant song, with a passage of deep, throbbing notes in the middle of each outburst, is very distinctive, and if you get up at dawn in almost any kind of habitat just now, it is likely that you will hear them singing all around.

DERWENT MAY

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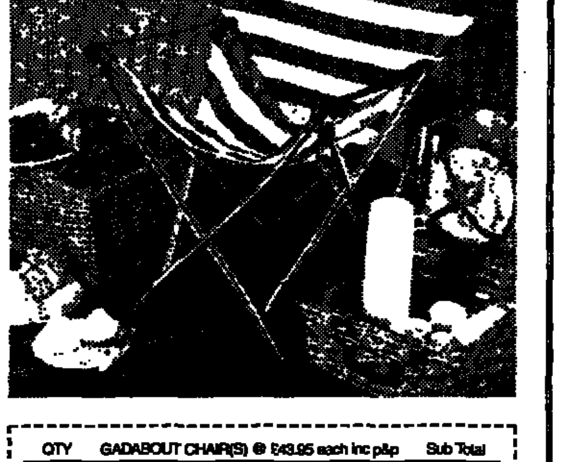

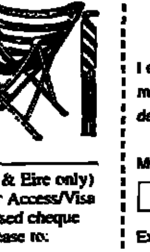

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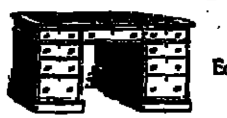

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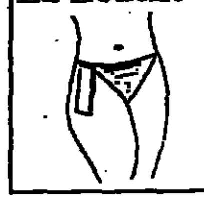

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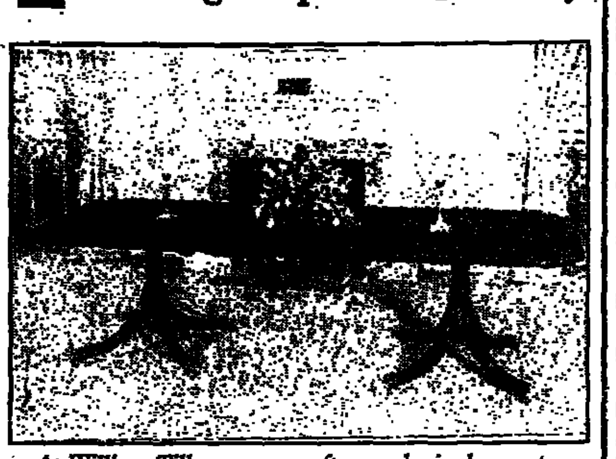

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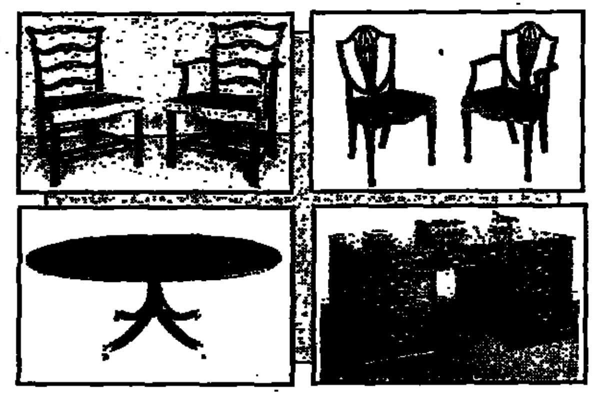

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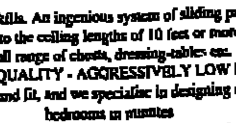

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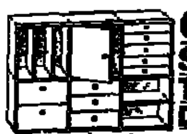

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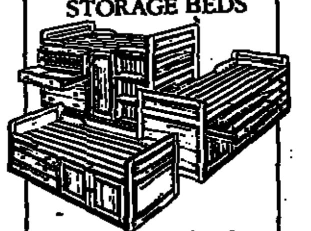

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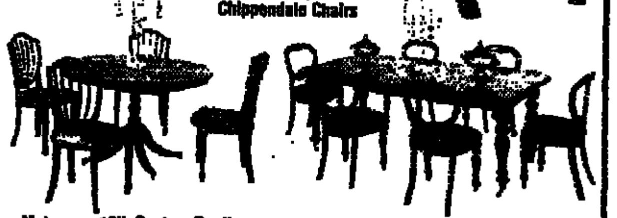

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If you go down to the woods today

> There are patches of ancient woodland all over Britain – if you know what to look for

A walk in the woods is a walk in the woods. But taken at the side of Christine Reid — a woodland officer from English Nature — and all the signs indicating whether a patch of wood is ancient or modern will be pointed out in the time it takes to skip to its farthest side. "It's not *so* hard," she says. "You look for the identifiers."

She leads me up the edge of Hayley Wood near Longstowe in Cambridgeshire on a fly-blown day and nods to the raised bank and ditch which rims the wood from the field. "Small woodbanks are fairly typical of ancient woods," she says. "They would have had pollard stumps and woven fences to keep animals from getting in and out."

Miss Reid is passionate about *our* ancient woods. She has drawn up free easy-to-follow pocket guidelines to help the lay woodland-walker get an historic angle on the woods they romp through or even own. "Ancient woods are the best examples of woodland for wildlife in the country. If the sometimes tiny fragments are identified they can be treated in ways appropriate to their status. I'm often called by people who have bought a wood and they say 'We don't know much about it but it's got bluebells and oak trees . . . it must be ancient.' That's not always the case."

Ancient woodland, by definition, has been wooded continuously since at least 1600. Modern planting began after that date, so if the wood was there by then it's likely to be old or a remnant of the wildwood which covered most of the country 7,000 years ago.

Two types of ancient woodland exist. "Semi-natural" is untouched and composed of native trees — oak, ash, maple, hazel, beech — while "replanted ancient woodland" has been wooded continuously since 1600 but the original cover has been replaced with planted trees (often conifer).

Not much ancient woodland survives. Since the 1920s, 38 per cent was felled or replaced with conifer. England's total woodland cover is 7.5 per cent (compared with a European average of 29 per cent). About 20 per cent of that survives as pure semi-natural ancient woodland. "The biggest problem is the ancient woods are so fragmented," Miss Reid says. "There are patches all over the place. Most are in Kent and Sussex but there's a lot in Cumbria and the Whey valley in Wales. Ancient woods in Cumbria drip with moss and lichen because the climate is so wet."

English Nature sends out free county-by-county inventories which map ancient woodland down to two hectares (five acres). But it knows there are many small scraps under two hectares. Only by cross-referring early Ordnance Survey map evidence (first edition 1809 reprints available from David & Charles publishers) with the field guidelines, is one able to identify the ancient from the not-so-old.

Miss Reid takes me further along a rambling path. We know Hayley Wood Nature Reserve is ancient because it's mentioned in the Domesday Book — if you wanted to graze 60 pigs there in 1086 it would cost two shillings per annum. She points to the random spacing of the trees and the multi-stem bushes of ash and hazel trees which rise to 15ft in wildish clumps.

"Coppice stools with oak standards — the tall trees cut for timber — are typical ancient features," she says. Coppicing is the old practice of cutting non-standard trees to the base every ten years. This allows sunlight to reach the woodland floor much more than in woods planted with conifers like juniper and yew which have a dense evergreen cover of needles.

"This makes the ground flora so special," she says, scooping her hand down to an oxslip. "They're a bit like a primrose and bit like a cowslip but oxslips have a drooping head. You don't find them outside ancient woods."

She lists rare plants that thrive there: wood millet, yellow archangel, spotted orchid, bird's nest orchid and the insectivorous lords-and-ladies flower. Yellow brimstone butterflies, commas, and white admirals do well in the glades of ancient woods which often follow the natural course and depressions of ponds and streams.

Bluebells, of course, are another ancient identifier. "You don't really get wonderful carpets of bluebell in non-ancient woods," she says. "You can't find them in Europe. Their woods are managed more than here. People come from all over the Continent to see something which is quite special."

I say the ancient wood has an untidy feel. Stunning 300 to 400-year-old oak trees are wizened and twisted. There are dead tree trunks lying on the woodland floor greening with moss. "That's a bit of a loaded statement," Miss Reid says. "It's very good for wildlife. It creates lively habitats for bats and woodpeckers and dormice."

We walk to a triangle of Hayley Wood planted in 1922. The trees are more or less the same height and evenly spaced. "There's a different feel to this place. It's more regimented, more orderly," she says. Old ridges and furrows underfoot are a sign the land was ploughed as farmland not so long ago — and, therefore, a recent addition.

Ancient woods have sinuous irregular boundaries. They're often along parish boundaries or adjacent to common lands and heaths. It's rare to find them bound by straight lines and their names incorporate old words for wood — "grove", "hanger" and "lea".

English Nature would like to link nearby fragments of ancient woodland and encourages owners of replanted ancient areas to replace conifers with native broadleaf trees.

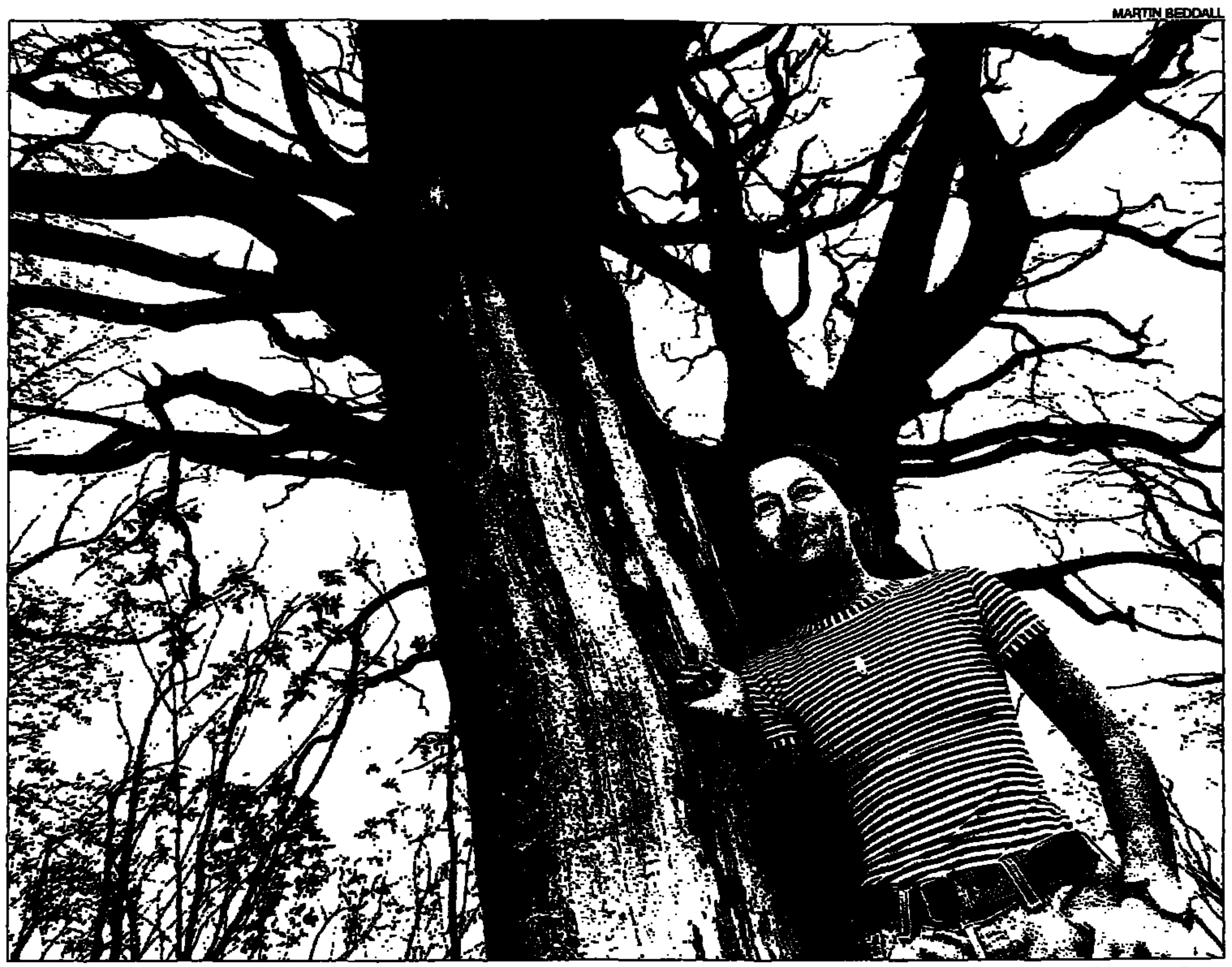
Miss Reid says: "The tiny fragments are so important because they store rare seeds and species which can be passed by birds along corridors of hedgerows to the larger ancient woodlands.

"When I walk through woods like Hayley Wood I am struck by its sense of history. The old trees give us a sense of time. I find it amazing that the wood has been used for centuries."

ALEX WIJERATNE

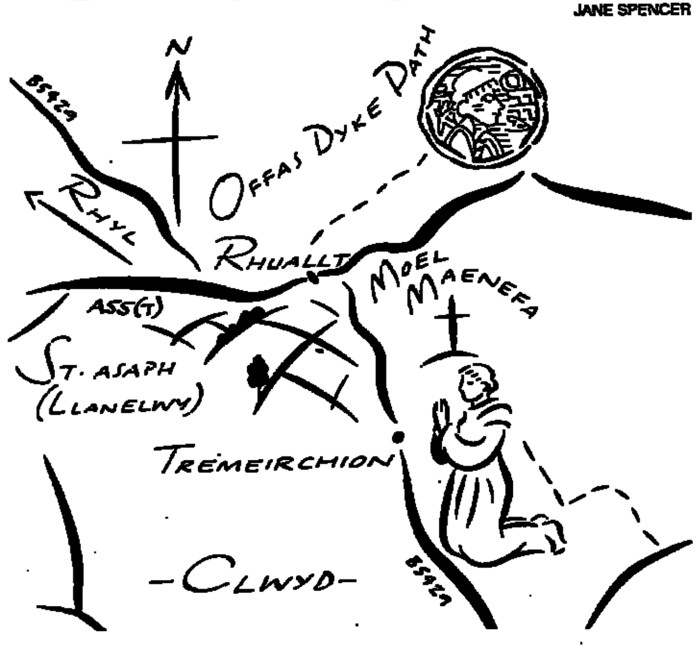
- *English Nature, 01733 455101. David & Charles, 01626 334555.*

MARTIN BEDDALL



Christine Reid of English Nature in Hayley Wood, Cambridgeshire. "I find it amazing that this wood has been used for centuries"

JANE SPENCER



ON THE SPOT: CLWYD

Rural recommendations

The place: The iron cross on the summit of Moel Maenefa, near Tremeirchion, Clwyd

The view: To the west a patchwork landscape "plotted and pieced — fold, fallow, and plough" of the Vale of Clwyd, and if the weather is clear the gleam of Snowdonia and the sea. To the east the bare hill falls away through green pastures and patches of beach wood to Cheshire.

The appeal: My parents used to live in the monastery of St Beuno's below. The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins studied for the priesthood there. He saw his "windhover" on this hilltop. The cross on the summit has become a place of pilgrimage.

Historical interest: The hilltop is part of Offa's Dyke, the boundary reputedly established by King Offa between Wales and Mercia in the 8th century. There are remains of ancient forts and tumuli.

Best time to visit: Spring when the slopes are clad with gorse and foxgloves and the "windhovers" hang against the wind. They are watching for the rabbits whose burrows riddle the slopes.

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Don't sneer at Rhyl and rarebit, it's now seriously hip to be Welsh. **Alex O'Connell** reports on a rising cultural identity

The year of the dragon

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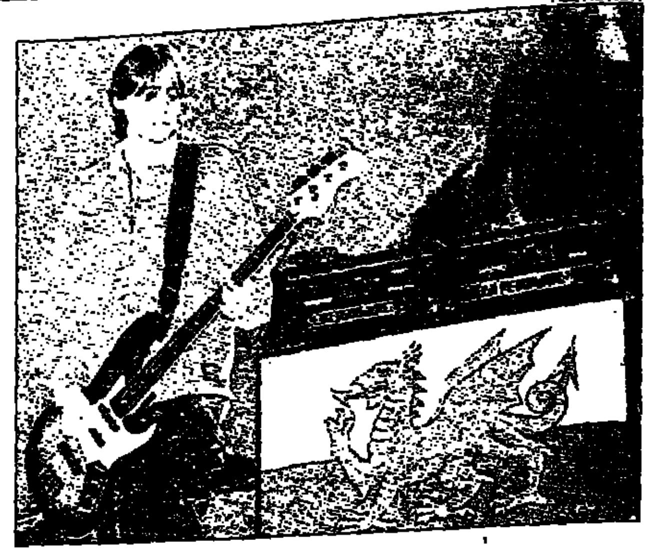

Our traditional view of Wales, right, is being challenged by the film *Twin Town*, above, and Brit winners, the Manic Street Preachers, top right

When Neil Kinnock stood for election in 1992, being Welsh was about as cool as a camping holiday in Rhyl. In a country more associated with rarebit and Ruth Madoc than the future of British politics, he was best advised that the way to gain support was to tame his lilting accent and play down his home town connections.

But in the past five years there has been a defining of Welsh cultural identity and a resurgence of nationalist spirit. Plaid Cymru, the second strongest political party in Wales behind Labour, is expecting to increase its voting power this year.

The Welsh arts scene is booming and if London is swinging then Newport and Swansea are gyrating so fast that dizzy city dwellers are having to sit down. The Union Jack has been heralded as the fashion print of the summer, but the seriously hip are wrapping themselves in the Red Dragon and wearing daffs on their lapels.

Tear yourself away from the pull of S4C's cult soap opera, *Pobol Y Cwm*, for long enough and you will notice that there are Welsh characters in *EastEnders* and BBC2's Nineties real-life drama, *This Life*. Both are pasty, whining and rather unlikely romantic characters, but they both break television tradition: they aren't miners and they don't sing in the church choir. The Welsh film industry also reflects this trend. So Abersoch may not be the new Cannes, but Welsh Film Festival promoters are expecting more visitors than ever this year. Urban Wales is at last getting a look in.

Karl Francis's *Streetlife*, written for *Screen One*, and Mark Evan's *House of America* discuss Welsh inner-city existence, while the independently made film *Twin Town* (co-produced by *Trainspotting* team Andrew MacDonald and Danny Boyle and directed by Kevin Allen), is set in Nineties Port Talbot and Swansea. Hollywood has also jumped to attention — there are rumours of a film about a colliery in South Wales starring the very un-Welsh Michelle Pfeiffer and Nick Nolte.

Even established Welsh stars like Tom Jones are reaching new levels of cultural recognition. He has always strutted over the cross-generational divide, attracting diverse audiences from the Sixties teeny-boppers who first wobbled to *Delilah*, to the twenty-somethings who remember his ironic cover of Prince's *Kiss*, but in Tim Burton's pre-millennial disaster movie, *Mars Attacks!*, he has reached a new generation. For the soundtrack to the alien invasion, Hollywood producers favoured Jones's quiet crooning of *It's Not Unusual* over the usual bleeping synthesisers.

There was a time when Aled Jones was the nearest the Welsh got to *Top of the Pops*. Although *Walking in the Air* had every choirboy in Britain shrieking into a tape recorder, wearing jeans on *Saturday Superstore* and meeting David Bowie does not a pop star make. But there is no doubt that Wales is exploding with talent. As tabloids dub Newport "the new Seattle" and the word "Britpop" is deleted from style glossaries, the unlikely catch-words, "Taff-pop" and "Daff-rock" fill the fanzines.

Welsh pop group the Manic Street Preachers, from Blackwood in Gwent, cleared up the silverware at last month's Brit Awards. Fiercely nationalistic, they dedicated their last album *Everything Must Go* to the Tower Colliery in Cyon Valley, South Wales (bought out by miners and put back in operation). On their last tour, they projected Dylan Thomas's poem, *I See the Boys of Summer*, on to the stage backdrop while bassist Nicky Wire took to hanging the Welsh flag over his amp, later cloaking himself in it to collect the Brit Awards. The group are anxious to work on a film script on Owain Glyndwr, the Welsh William Wallace, procurer of self-rule in Wales. *Everything Must Go* has shifted 350,000 copies and the band are on a lap-of-honour tour. Even Kylie Minogue has recorded a single with them for her new album.

The lesser-known Pembrokeshire band, Gorky's Zygotic Mynci, play traditional instruments (including a crumhorn and a shawm, a medieval reed instrument) and many of their songs are written in Welsh.

Their latest album, *Barafundle*, is named after a beach in South Wales. At their Cardiff gig on St David's Day, the audience pinned daffodils to their T-shirts and, although most only spoke English, they sang along to the Welsh anthems with gusto. Graham Noone, bassist in the Newport band FUCD, who runs the Tuesday night local band slot at Newport venue TJ's, says most of the bands that have passed through his doors, including the Manics, Gorky's, 60Ft Dolls, Dubwar and Super Furry Animals, consistently return to Newport. "They love Wales," he says. "OK, so it's a depressing place, but that's why people are so enthused and getting on with things."

He denies the rumours, for the record, that Newport is the new Seattle. "It's Newport, actually. A lot of the music here is rock-based, too, but there is really no comparison." He says Cardiff is too much like London, and prefers Swansea and Newport. "When you play in Cardiff people tend to sit down and clap a bit, here in Newport they go mad. Most of the audience are members of other bands, they all record at each other's studios and go to each other's clubs. We all know each other."

This familiarity extends to the theatre world. The actor Michael Sheen and Swansea-born writer-director Simon Harris went to the same Swansea theatre school and they formed the Welsh theatre company, Thin Language, together. Harris's play *Badfinger*, directed by Sheen as part of the Four Corners season at the Donmar Warehouse and about to be taken on a Welsh tour, was partly financed by a string of pals that reads like a valley boys' *Who's Who*: the Manics, the Kinnocks, playwright Julian Mitchell, actor Anthony Hopkins, footballer Mark Hughes and the nominally Welsh football player Vinnie Jones.

Like his pop peers, Sheen's heart is still west of London and he has hopes of creating a theatre there. "I am based here now, I have to be," he says, "but I go back home to Port Talbot whenever I can."

The highest number of self-employed in the country are residents of Plaid's four Mid-Wales seats. Although some of these are more likely to subscribe to *Farmers Weekly* than *The Stage* or *NME*, there are also extraordinary numbers of self-motivated artists and crafts people.

Do these figures suggest Plaid Cymru might benefit by activating this talent to form a Welsh Red Wedge cum Rock the Vote? "So far we have actor Phillip Maddock campaigning on the streets, but that's about it," says a man in the Plaid Cymru office.

The guitarist of the Welsh pop group Catatonia lives with Hywel Wigley, son of Plaid president Dafydd, but the party thinks the chances of the band singing from the back of an election trailer are slim: "I'm sure they are much too busy partying in Swansea."

A VET WRITES

Q The teacher at my daughter's school keeps a cockatiel in a cage in the classroom and I am concerned it may be a risk to my daughter's health because she is asthmatic. Should I raise the matter?

A Ornithosis — which used to be called psittacosis — can be transmitted to man and cause a type of pneumonia. But if the cockatiel is healthy there is little chance that he is infected. If your daughter has not had any problems associated with this classroom it suggests bird dust is not a factor in her attacks.

JAMES ALLCOCK

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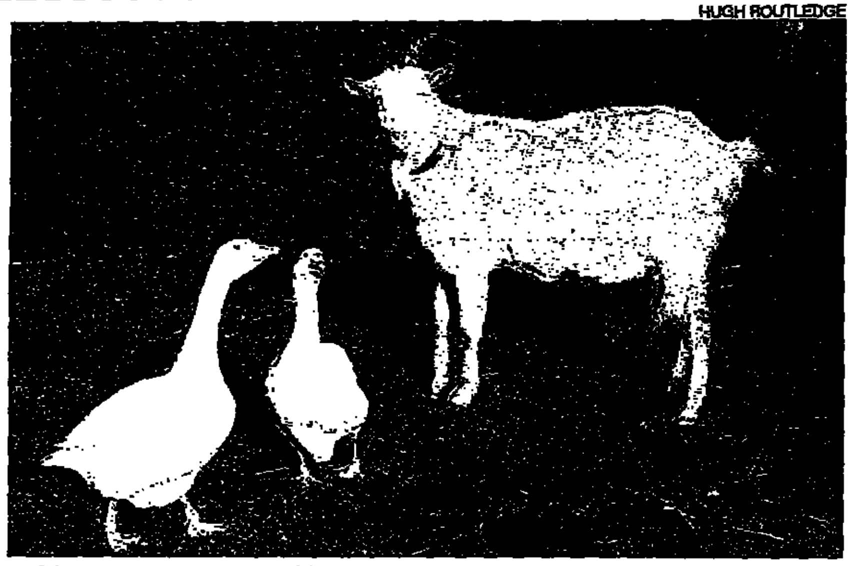
That animal magnetism

Some pets can form unlikely alliances with other creatures

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Chippy the goat protects his geese friends Samson and Delilah from dogs

If a man's best friend is a dog, then it should not come as too much of a surprise to find that a goose can forge a relationship with a goat, and a horse with a cat. And it certainly comes as no surprise to Dr Roger Mugford who runs Ruxbury Farm, an Animal Behaviour Centre to which vets can refer their problem patients whose conduct needs improving.

"Most animals are social and they look around for others of their species to bond with," Dr Mugford says. "But when an animal is denied contact with its own species, it will seek friendship elsewhere and, as a result, form some very unusual relationships." These cross-species associations are the basis of our relationships with domestic pets — especially where there is only one animal in the household. "If we want to have animals as pets and feel they love us, the penalty we have to pay is their dependence on us," he says.

The relationship, according to Dr Mugford, is one of social commensalism where pet and owner obtain benefits from the other without either being harmed. "In the case of Chippy, a goat, and Nobby, a goose, I think the goat gets more out of the relationship because he is my only goat. Nobby does have two other geese for friends. But the goat does protect the geese from dogs." Bonding between different species can have many benefits including the avoidance of traditional animosities if the animals are introduced at an early age. A puppy brought up in a house with cats will pal up with the felines rather than declare war on them.

Basil is a fox who likes nothing better than to curl up on the sofa with his friends — the other cats and dogs who live at the Capricorn Animal Rescue Centre in North Wales. Rescued as a day-old cub after he was abandoned by his family ten months ago, he was bottle-fed by staff and treated like a puppy — even being taken for walks on a lead. A diet of tinned dog food completed Basil's domestication.

Staff at the rescue centre doubt that Basil will ever be returned to the wild as he does not have the skills to survive — he is even frightened of chickens and other fowl. A rescued gander picked up the young cub by his tail and carried him around the centre. "That left a lasting impression on him and he's afraid of anything with feathers," says Sheila Stewart, manageress of the rescue centre.

Such displays of animal magnetism are also evident in horse-racing. Nearly every trainer has a tale to tell of a horse who grew dependent on another animal for friendship (including sheep, goats, donkeys and even a pigeon). In many cases this resulted in the companion animal enjoying a day at the races.

Remittance Man, a highly strung gelding and winner of the Queen Mother Chase at Cheltenham in 1992, cannot bear to be parted from his stable-mate Nobby, the third and longest-serving sheep to have kept the horse company. Nobby travelled everywhere with the horse during his racing career and they are now enjoying retirement together in Oxfordshire. Horses form strange relationships because of loneliness. To avoid the costly accidents that can happen when horses play together, racehorses must be kept apart. Many spend much of their day in a single-cell stable.

The animal watcher Desmond Morris compares this incarceration to prisoners being kept in solitary confinement. "It can make humans go mad eventually," he says. "Horses are gregarious animals but they are also very amenable. Most will put up with being alone. But when we say racehorses are highly strung, what we mean is that they can't cope with isolation."

Gomez, a cat at Ruxbury Farm, has formed a bond there with a horse called Jupiter. Dr Mugford says: "They play together and the cat lets the horse chase him around the field, but Jupiter is careful not to hurt Gomez."

But he warns that such relationships do not always work. "You are more likely to have trouble between different species than with animals of the same kind. This can be apparent where one animal is a carnivore, such as a dog, and another is what might be considered its traditional prey, such as a chicken or sheep." A study — or some knowledge at least — of a species' natural history is recommended for the pet lover who wishes to have a variety of animals in the home. The domestic behaviour of pets is often at odds with their natural instincts which can surface at any time.

BRENDAN MARTIN

● *Dr Roger Mugford, Animal Behaviour Centre, PO Box 23, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 0PU (01932 566696).*

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'Everyone being in disguise contributed to the party's success, since the famous were often outshone in the costume department'

Elton and other party animals

LIFE AND SOUL

GINNY DOUGARY

Elton's blown it for me. I had always rather thought that I threw the best parties, but now I have to concede that I don't. Last Sunday, he hosted the raviest, grooviest, most fantabuloso birthday bash of all time, and — to my great pleasure and not a little amazement — we were there. Obviously most of us don't have a spare £150,000 to blow on a knees-up for our mates but, equally, his party managed to hit all the right spots in a way that I'm pretty sure similar extravaganzas by Malcolm Forbes or Robert Maxwell wouldn't have. I've never seen so many people look so happy dancing for so long under one roof, and not an illegal substance in sight.

This was particularly striking because for some years now, I am sad to report as the Life and Soul (of the party) columnist, most of my friends have given up dancing. When we first knew each other, in the long hedonistic years before children and careers had whittled away our leisure time, and when nothing in life seemed more important than friendship and having fun, we used to go clubbing all the time. No one needed any encouragement then to get up and shake their bootie. But now everyone seems to be too exhausted to boogie, let alone organise a proper thrash.

The problem is that when the occasion is rather low-key, as it so often is these days, there is nothing to rise to. It seems that we can only abandon ourselves to the party spirit when we have been compelled to make an effort to dress up.

As I have known, to my cost, a successful party on even a fairly modest scale requires military planning and execution. The organisation of Elton's party (with a rather immodest guest list of 800) was faultless. And talk about making an effort to dress up . . . Having rejected the Liz Taylor pre-rehab kaftan and the Divine meets Ursula Andress in wafty full-length toga look, my husband and I attempted (not entirely successfully) to resemble a couple from a Gainsborough portrait.

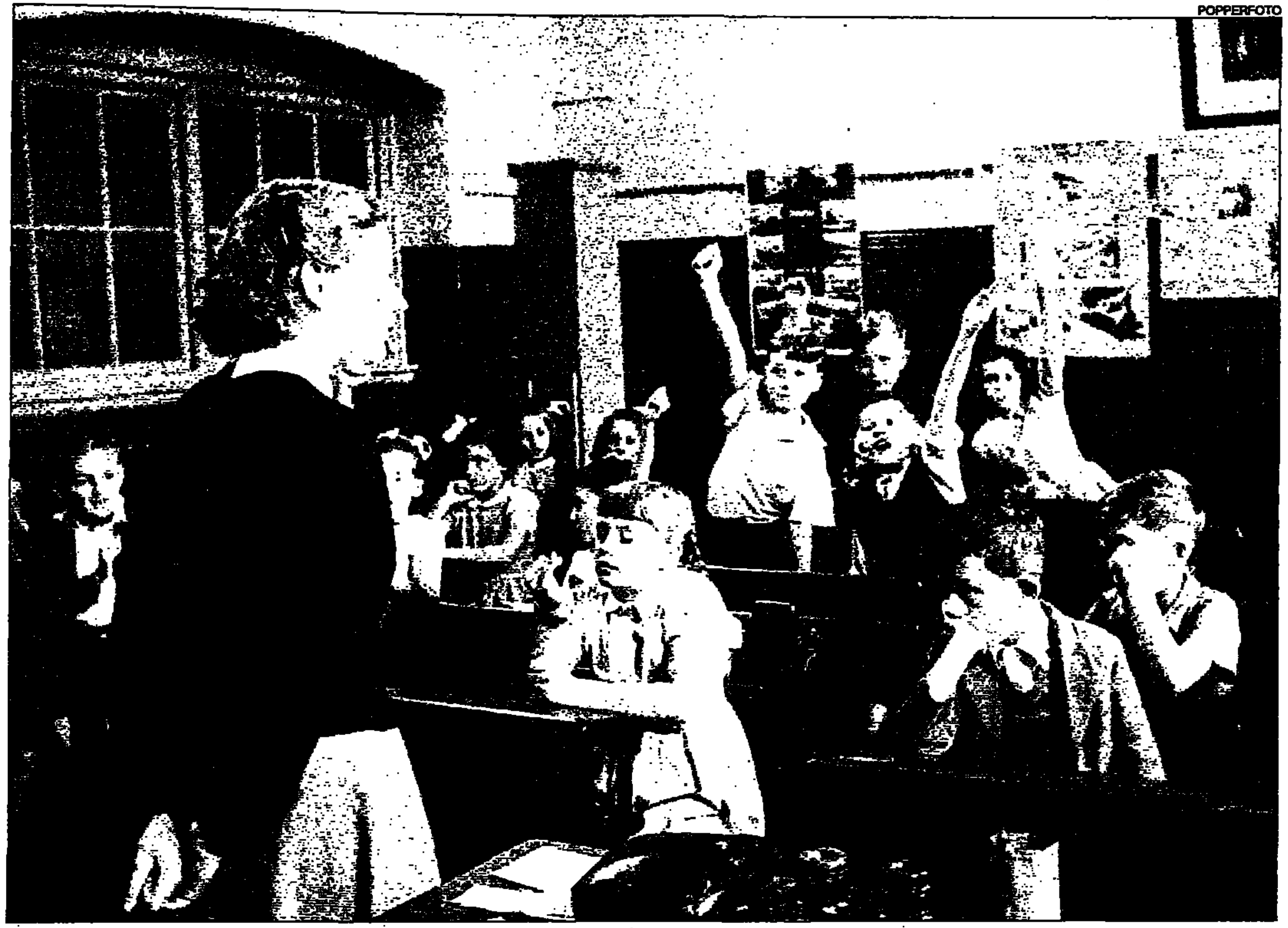
The fact that everyone was in disguise — celebrities and non-celebrities alike — contributed to the party's success. It had a strangely levelling effect, since the famous were quite often outshone in the costume department by the unfamous. At one point, I found myself bopping in a spectacularly starry cluster: Lord Lloyd Webber, looking like a 12-year-old in long socks, shorts and football strip (*Fever Pitch*, the musical?) with Lady Lloyd Webber as a Bunny Girl; Richard E Grant as a wigless Cavalier; Sir David Frost, in black tie, gamely doing his best to frug; Billy Joel as a slightly portly GI and the 50-year-old party boy himself, with his film-maker inamorato, David Furnish, a dazzling pair of silver-spangled Louis Quatorzes.

I could have danced all night and very nearly did. When I heard that Boy George was the DJ, I had imagined that we'd be hearing a lot of weirdo scratchy dubby stuff. Instead, he played just about every single from the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties that you've ever wanted to dance to. At the sound of *That's the way (uh-huh, uh-huh) I like it*, I tossed my curly wig and slipped into my Pan's People routine, to be joined by a Leigh Bowery-lookalike in day-glo pink platforms. Later, during *Dancing Queen*, we joined a hefty couple in matching home-made, homage-to-Mary-Quant mini-dresses to dance around our handbags — as you do — theirs from the 1960s, mine from the 1760s.

I used to think that the only way to get a party moving was to invite huge numbers of gay men — a tactic clearly shared by Elton. But after organising my mother's 70th several years ago, I realised that there was one other group dedicated to dancing the night away. I now know that what you need for your party to go with a swing is as many active septuagenarians as you can muster. We erected a marquee in our back garden with a trestle table, seating 70, smothered in white flowers. Our living room was stripped bare and the carpet covered with a wooden dance floor, in the corner of which was a jukebox which contained a cunning mixture of Glenn Miller (for the oldies) and Tamla Motown (for the not-so-oldies). Before the waiters had even cleared away the plates, Mum's friends — the men resplendent in black tie, the women (inevitably the majority) visions in full-length chiffon and satin and silk — stampeded the dance floor and shimmied and swayed and twisted as though the chance to dance might never come again.

It was three in the morning when my mother sat down and requested a cup of coffee. I shall never forget the look of delighted surprise in her eyes as she twirled indefatigably around our living room. She was certainly "In the mood" that night — which was probably what made it such a swell party for me. I'd like to say, Elton eat your heart out. But after Sunday, I can quite see that I can't.

POPPERFOTO



Some children taught by a parent never recover from the collision of public and private worlds which may also alienate them from classmates

It's parents' day all year

When mother or father is also your teacher it can make life awkward, says **Adrian Mourby**

All parents possess the ability to embarrass us, particularly in front of our friends. But can anything be worse than having your mother or father teaching at your school? It happened to Tony Muir 30 years ago and he still claims not to have recovered from that awful collision of public and private worlds.

For as long as Tony could remember, his father had been a kindly but vague figure who went out on his bike in the morning and turned up in the evening. Then when Tony was 12, Mr Muir was appointed deputy head at his son's grammar school and the next thing Tony can remember is this angry man chasing his classmates down the corridor.

Worst of all, as the miscreants were dragged away, Tony had to stand there and feel their long accusatory glances. Although it had been their misbehaviour that occasioned the new deputy's wrath, Tony felt he was being branded a quisling. People who have been taught by their parents often congregate at parties swapping stories of alienation and persecution.

Rosie Lewis, however, feels she survived the experience better than most. Rosie and her sister Joanna spent their entire school life in a world where mum was also the English teacher. It didn't seem at all odd therefore that every morning, at some stage between getting into the car and arriving at school, the girls' mother would be transformed into that well-known classroom disciplinarian, *Mrs Purnell*. "Thinking about it, it does seem funny," says Rosie, 34: "When I take my children to school in the morning we kiss and cuddle at the gate before I say goodbye but there was never any of that with Mum. I never knew anything different, of course, so it didn't bother me, but looking back it does seem strange."

Joanna, 36, can recall how easy it was to disconnect from the family relationship once school began. "If I'd see Mum coming down the corridor at school, I'd just think 'it's one of the teachers'. We never exchanged glances or talked about what we'd be having for tea. That was just how it was."

A young Mrs Purnell: "I wasn't at school as a parent"

Tony Muir is less philosophical. Now in his forties he still wishes his father had never come to teach at the local grammar school. "It wasn't just the fear of reprisals — although there were some of those — this was a time when I would have liked to get to know my father better but, if anything, I felt more distant from him. We were both of us very keen not to embarrass the other and I think that made for a real distance between us. In my twenties I wanted to ask him why he took the job. Surely he must have known the difficulties it would cause? But I never did."

Tony also felt he was picked on by some of the teaching staff. "I'd overhear my parents talking about this one and that one my father was having trouble with and I'm sure some of those masters took it out on me. Not directly but there was this level of aggression. My parents always tried not to speak about school business in front of me but you can't hide every time the phone goes."

Tony admits that he probably became oversensitive about how other people treated him. "There was a sort of tradition in our school that the fifth form always ran riot on the last day of the school year. Each year tried to do something different from the last but when I was in the fifth I was kept out of what they were planning. I didn't say anything at the time but I remember thinking that that was really mean after all the years I'd been at school with those boys. It really brought home to me how little they trusted me."

> If I saw Mum in the school corridor, we ignored each other

Life was a lot easier for the Purnell daughters who attended Our Lady's Convent in the centre of Cardiff. "If anything I think the other girls protected us," Rosie explains. "I never felt they ganged up on me because my mum was strict. Sometimes you'd hear someone look at what we'd got next and say 'Oh God, *Mrs Purnell*' but never to my face."

What Rosie feared most was her mother getting to hear about anything she did wrong. "I was a real scaredy-cat at school but I don't think any of the teachers did tell on me."

Mrs Purnell, now retired from teaching, shakes her head. "I don't remember anyone ever talking to me about the girls all the time I was there. I was in the staff room as a teacher, not as a parent."

The classic difficulty that arises from having a foot in both camps is that you never feel quite at home in either. Rosie was stung once when she gained a prize at the school eisteddfod and was told by another girl that she'd only won because her mother was the English teacher. "But if Mum ever marked our homework," says Joanna. "It came back a mass of red ink."

Thirty years later Tony Muir still feels that he was caught up in battles between the staff and their reforming new deputy. "I was aware that it was important to do well. My father tried not to push me but I knew that it would be a disgrace if I did badly."

Although the Purnell girls and Tony Muir came out of the experience very differently, all three clearly felt a very real concern for their parents. Joanna can recall her friends impersonating the teachers. "Mum used to raise one eyebrow if she was cross. I used to dread seeing anyone raising an eyebrow like that." "What I really hated was being in a classroom next to her," says Rosie. "I didn't want to hear her telling anyone off."

With the deputy head for a father Tony Muir was even more vulnerable. "I used to see him up on the stage in assembly. It was his job to tell the various forms when to leave and I had this dread that one day no one would do what he'd say, that there'd be a revolt and he'd be powerless. It's awful to fear something like that about your father."

This concern for our parents is something we are used to feeling at home but at school the world normally divides more simply into "them" and "us" — adults vs children. The problem of having a parent teaching alongside you is that loyalties are divided.

Tony Muir says: "My father died three years ago and I never asked him why he took that job. We never talked about what either of us went through. It was probably just as bad for him but we never spoke of it. I wish we had been able to."

Ruth Gledhill enjoys worship ancient and modern

Back to the future

WITH 1,000 days to go before the third Christian millennium begins, Greenwich parish church was the only possible place to visit. With pre-millennial tension building up around the world, I anticipated a fevered excitement among Anglicans worshipping at the universal centre of time. But if ever a sense of the eternal, unchanging, omnipresent nature of the Church of England, or perhaps of God, is to be had, it is here.

Even though a millennium clock nearby had already started to tick the seconds away, it felt as if time was standing still. The church, like the hymn book it uses, combines ancient and modern. It has its own Web site, but uses a traditional liturgy peppered with *thee* and *thy* for communion. A committee has been appointed to plan millennium celebrations. Ideas under discussion including commissioning a dance for St Alfege, a carol from Cliff Richard, a *son et lumière* and re-enacting the journey of the Magi across Greenwich park at Christmas 1999. Yet Sunday worship in this beautiful church is reassuringly Anglican and traditional.

The vicar, who is also chaplain to the Royal Naval college nearby, was on holiday and our service was taken by the curate, Canon Richard Buck, whose natural ebullience belied his 60 years. The congregation was dotted with angelic children who were among the best-behaved I've seen in church.

There has been a church here at least since the time of the martyrdom of St Alfege, the 29th Archbishop of Canterbury and the man who introduced the precept of eating fish on Friday. He was taken hostage by the invading Danes on Easter Saturday and despatched with an axe on the site where the church now stands. Tomorrow the church will be closed during the Marathon, but next week worshippers can return to celebrate the feast day of their saint.

The composer Thomas Tallis was buried in the chancel of the church preceding this one and he is believed to have used an organ console preserved in the present church. Many members of the choir sing in the Tallis Society, which explained their breathtaking rendition of the anthem, *And I Saw a New Heaven* by Bainton. God's salvation would be revealed at the end of time, we heard, in our reading from the first letter of Peter. "In this we rejoice, though now for a little while we may have to suffer various trials." Canon Buck preached about the self-inflicted trials of the Heaven's Gate suicide cult. "They killed themselves to free their souls from their bodies in order to be caught up to heaven in a spacecraft manned by aliens," he said. "Make no mistake, we will hear and read of many more such bizarre tragedies in the next 1,000 days or so as millennialist fever erupts all over the world and new cults proliferate." To be truly human does not mean shuffling off this mortal coil to become a free spirit, he said.

He referred to Talleyrand, an excommunicated bishop who became Napoleon's chief agent. "A man sought his advice on founding a religion which would be scientific, ethical and free from the superstitions of Christianity," he said. Talleyrand thought deeply and then replied: "I advise you to die and on the third day to rise again."

- St Alfege Greenwich, London SE10 (0181-858 6828).

http://www.longitude0.co.uk/St-alfege

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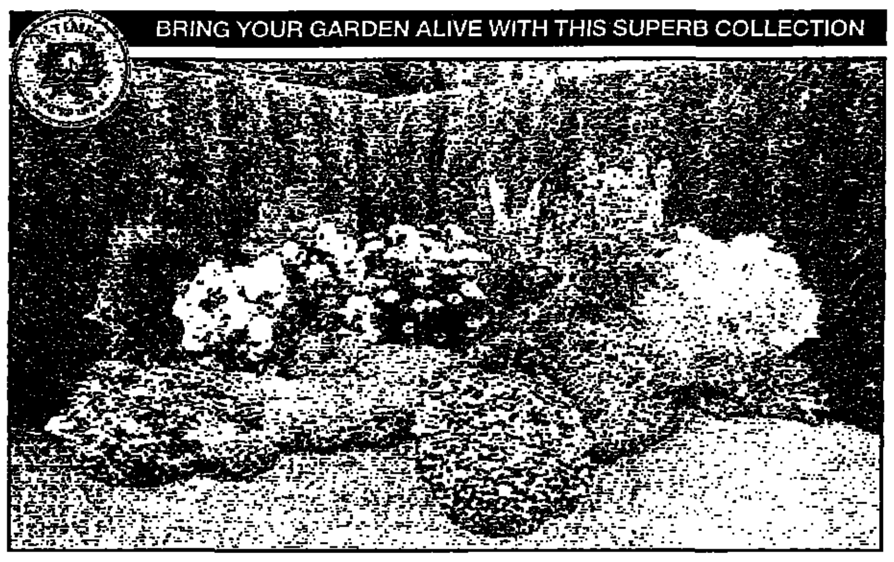

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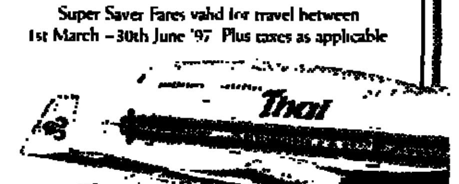

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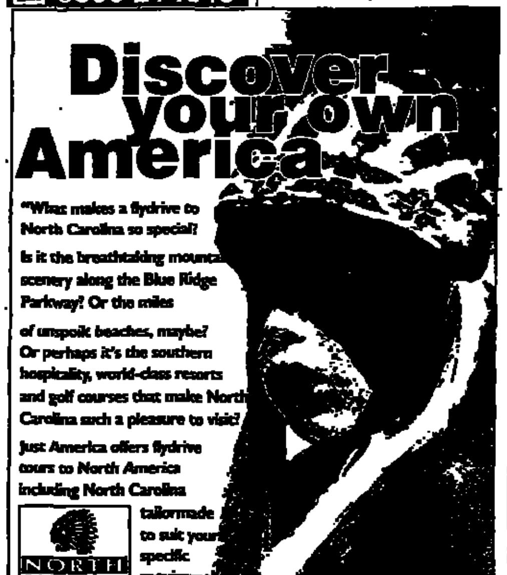

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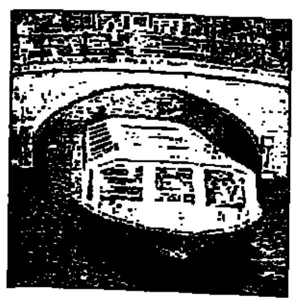

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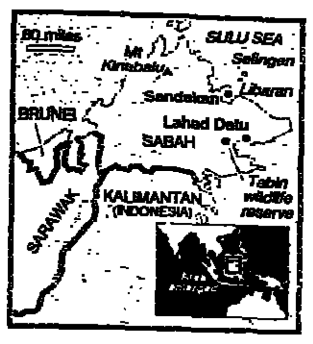

Borneo is changing, but the jungle still calls, says Stephen McClarence

PICTURES

A village woman of the jungle, her ear lobes pierced, stretched and hung with weighty jewellery, is the traditional face of old Borneo. Elsewhere, high-rise hotels and shopping malls reflect the Malaysian boomtime

Lightning flashes through the dark Borneo jungle, flying foxes squabble in the treetops, fireflies flit. And, from somewhere in the dusk, a strange bird call trills out. It is high-pitched, regular, insistent in its command. "A hornbill?" I ask Patrick, our guide. "Our mobile phone," he says. And answers it.

There's a familiarity about this. On a previous trip to Borneo, still the most mysteriously remote of islands, we took an express boat up river. In the cabin, old men in loin cloths with earlobes dangling down their cheeks sat next to headhunters' grandchildren. The cabin lights went down and the entertainment started . . . two hours of World Wrestling Federation videos. That night the sun set in scarlet fury and from across the river drifted music of primeval resonance: Herman's Hermits singing *Something Tells Me I'm into Something Good.*

Nowhere is safe from Colaisation, but Sabah is safer than most. In the top right-hand corner of Borneo, it's the least familiar, the most eastern part of eastern Malaysia.

Patrick — half Filipino, quarter Bornean and quarter Irish — is leading our jungle trek. He has big plans for us: five miles through rainforest, hacking a way; wading across rivers, hanging on to rope bridges. Adventure, he says.

Our party set off the following morning by Land Rover for the Tabin Wildlife Reserve, the largest protected area in Sabah, well off the tourist trail. Its jungles support mammals such as the Plain Pygmy Squirrel, the Hairy-nosed Otter, the White Nocturnal Moonrat and the Lesser False Vampire Bat. We see none of them, but they probably see us as we stride past towering trees with great, buttressed trunks, twined and twisted with creepers. Everything here clings desperately to the slivers of light.

There are six of us, including porters. Sharim carries the food, Dodong has the pots and pans and Mukattil brings up the rear, with the chemical toilet (and screens). From time to time Patrick calls out the names of the birds perching or soaring 200ft above us — the blue-throated bee-eater, the Asian paradise flycatcher, the Malayan blue hanging parakeet. He whistles to them. They whistle back.

We set up camp near a mud volcano: a clearing in the forest where animals gather to bathe. Patrick stares at a pile of dung. "Elephants were here yesterday," he says.

Sharim starts cooking dinner on a Primus stove, and insects are lured by the light. A flying grasshopper as big as a sparrow lands on my shoulder. No problem, Patrick says. Not dangerous. "But that is. . ." He bangs his plate down on a beetle inching towards the omelette. "It flies in your ear and can't get out," he says. "There are many insects," says Mukattil thoughtfully.

As darkness falls, the croaking tree frogs take over from the "six o'clock cicadas". Big-winged butterflies float past like tissue paper. The sun sets a lurid yellow, the flying squirrels circle as we sit under a vast dome of stars. The darkness is infinite, the jungle screeches and shooting stars flash across the sky. Both calming and alarming, it is very near paradise.

The next day is full of hornbills, flapping and cackling in derision. It's hot enough to shower in your own sweat but later, in the evening cool, we climb on the Land Rover for a night safari.

Patrick scans the trees and roadsides with a searchlight, and suddenly a pair of animal eyes glints back. A leopard cat, a civet, a couple of owls? "Buffy fish owls," Patrick says. It's the exhilaration of a hunt without the cruelty.

We drive on to Sandakan, the centre for the birds-nest soup industry and capital of British North Borneo in the days when rubber planters shared gin *pahits* with Somerset Maugham. Photographs in the Church of St Michael and All Angels show tweedy British rectors in sturdy shoes, grinning broadly in the dazzling sunlight.

From the quay, full of steamers straight out of *Lord Jim*, we motorboat to Libaran, an offshore island which is being discreetly developed as a holiday village.

It's a classic, almost clichéd, tropical island, with palm trees, white beaches and lapping waves. In the bamboo chalets, the fans whirr listlessly, a slight breeze ruffles the mosquito nets, and happy tourists doze.

Most of the tourists have come for an evening of turtle-watching on nearby Selingan island. Sobered by the news that only one turtle egg in 10,000 survives and that the creatures can be blinded by flashbulbs, we eat in the Sunset Cafeteria and wait for the turtles to provide the after-dinner entertainment.

After two hours, the guides signal that rangers have found a turtle laying her eggs. We sprint across the beach to the crater where she has reached egg No 56 of her batch of 119. We cluster round like a torch-light Nativity scene.

Later, ready-hatched baby turtles are released into the water. "Go for it Leonardo," shouts an excited American, splashing about among them. "Donatello . . . that's my boy."

Less hyperactive is a cruise round the tangled mangrove swamps off the Borneo coast. The boat makes a laid-back way round coiling rivers where the jungle presses restlessly to the water's edge. Monitor lizards, like prototype crocodiles, patrol the banks, eyeing baby monkeys.

Every quarter mile are shacks on stilts, small communities of fishermen and boatbuilders. Three children in neat blue uniforms paddle home from school in a canoe, looking strangely suburban in all this wilderness.

"Do you hear that clicking?" Bingo, our new guide asks. "It's clams closing."

On the sail back to Sandakan, we pass convoys of boats piled high with timber and controversy. Malaysia's logging policy may alarm environmentalists, but the nation's Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohammad, is thrusting in self-defence. European nations have destroyed much of their forests, he says in *The Borneo Post*. Look at Sherwood Forest — cut down and replaced by castles. "Now it is our turn to develop. But they are not happy with it. They would like us to maintain our culture and to live in the jungle with no schooling. To them, there isn't much difference between us and animals."

His words go down well in Malaysia. A campaign for the "Expression of Gratitude to the Prime Minister", celebrating Mahathir's 15 years in office, has attracted more than 30,000 greetings from companies and voters.

How different from our own "White Rajahs", the Brooke family who ruled Sarawak, the other half of eastern Malaysia, with benign feudalism for just over a century. Their Home Counties-style palace in Kuching, the state capital, is still the fairylit focal point of a fascinating city, where the high-rise hotels and shopping malls of boomtime Malaysia are going up.

In the markets at the far end of Chinatown, with its Doris Beauty Salon, crowds gather every evening to buy durians, the "Queen of Fruits" whose sweaty cheese smell gets it banned from many hotels. They squeeze them, shake them, smell them. It's more like a medical examination that a purchase.

The medical shops themselves advertise dandelion for diabetes, gentian for nerves, and algin for environmental pollution.

A main attraction is the museum, once run by Tom Harrison, who studied the tribes of Sarawak after setting up Mass Observation to study the tribes of northern England. Its main gallery features the contents of a crocodile's stomach, including a dental plate (top set) and, with just a hint of Captain Hook, a wristwratch, stopped forever at a quarter to four.

At the far end of the gallery is a reconstructed native longhouse, with human skulls hung in the rafters.

Do people live that way now, I ask a man studying a carved hornbill. "Oh no," he says, "they're civilised now." And his mobile phone rings.

● *The author was a guest of Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions.*

BORNEO FACT FILE

■ Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions (0171-381 8638) organises tailor-made tours of Borneo, from £1,745 for a two-week Sabah Wildlife Safari, including four days' jungle trekking in Tabin, three days on Libaran Island and return flights from London.

■ A double room at the Riverside Majestic Hotel in Kuching (00 60 82 247777) costs about £94 a night, including taxes.

■ Vaccinations are not compulsory for Sarawak and Sabah, but protection against typhoid, cholera, hepatitis A, polio, tetanus and malaria are recommended. See your GP.

■ British passport holders do not need visas for Sarawak and Sabah.

■ The best time to visit is March-July. Temperatures hover around 30C all year. The rainy season is November-February.

■ Reading: the Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo*, by Odoardo Beccari (Oxford Univeristy Press, £11.95). *Into the Heart of Borneo*, by Redmond O'Hanlon (Penguin, £6.99). *Malaysia & Singapore Handbook*, by Joshua Eliot (Footprint, £12.99). *Insight Guide, Sabah* (Insight, £3.99).

STILL PICTURES

A pristine Bornean rainforest, unchanged for 60 million years and protected from settlers by mountainous terrain

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AROUND THE WORLD: A WEEKEND GUIDE

Burnt out by the sun

TRAVEL NEWS

■ **DESPITE** increasing awareness of the dangers of sunburn, one in six Britons still overdoses on sunshine on holiday, a new survey says.

Nearly half of those who suffered used creams that were too weak. A higher number said they did not realise how strong the sun was. About 28 per cent got burnt after falling asleep in the sun. Burns were so bad that one in ten sufferers had to go to a doctor or hospital, says the insurance company Home & Overseas.

The older generation are the *most sensible*, with two-thirds of over-55s saying they never got sunburnt, compared with one-third aged below 35.

■ **MORE GERMANS** travel to more countries than any other nation. Their wanderlust means that almost 80 million — one in eight — of the world's tourists come from Germany. The Czechs are the second most travelled people with 57.3 million on the move last year. Americans are in third place and Britons fourth, according to a survey by analyst Euromonitor.

France is the most popular country and attracts 60.5 million foreign visitors a year, with Spain second, America third, Italy fourth, China fifth and Britain sixth.

The biggest growth in both arrivals and departures has been in eastern Europe, with Poland recording a 70 per cent increase since 1991.

■ **RESTAURANTS** in some of the most popular resorts in Cyprus, such as Ayia Napa and Protaras, will shut next week because of a strike by staff in protest at a Government ban on issuing work permits to foreigners.

■ **SINGAPORE** just pipped Manchester to be voted the world's top airport by long-haul airline passengers, says the International Air Transport Association. The new terminal at Changi ousted Manchester from the top spot it held last year in a poll of 55,000 passengers.

■ **A NEW** agency letting cottages has opened in Northern Ireland, with more than 100 properties on its books. Country Cottages (01232 815858) offers converted coach houses, farmhouses, fishing lodges and stone cottages, all of which are tourist-board graded. Peak season prices rise to £400 a week.

Frazer Hood, of Country Cottages, says: "Until now, there has not been an independent agent acting for self-catering owners in Northern Ireland."

On request, he will identify the type of cottage required and send individual details of relevant properties.

■ **SOUTH** African Airways has dropped its orange livery with a Springbok on the tailfin of its 2,000 aircraft in favour of the country's new flag.

■ **P&O** European Ferries has reduced peak-season fares on the prime Dover-Calais route by 22 per cent to bring it in line with its Channel Tunnel rival Le Shuttle.

The new fares are £210 for peak weekend travel and £150-£169 for weekday sailings. Single and five-day tickets start at £90. All prices are applicable to a car and up to eight passengers.

Night life with Elvis

FORGET THE likes of the Hard Rock Café and Planet Hollywood; a nightclub bearing the Elvis name is to open in Memphis this summer as part of the biggest ever Elvis Week (August 9-17), commemorating the 20th anniversary of the king of rock'n'roll's death. Expected to be the first of a worldwide chain, the large club complex is situated in the former Lansky's department store where the young Elvis bought his drainpipes and loafers in the 1950s.

Other highlights of the wake will include a candlelit vigil on August 15, the night of his death, talk-ins between family, friends and fans, and the opening of his parents' bedroom at his Gracelands mansion. A favourite Elvis snack — fried peanut butter and banana sandwiches — will be on sale throughout at the café next to his recording studio.

JEFF MITCHELL

You too can place flowers on Elvis Presley's grave at Graceland during Elvis Week in August, which marks the 20th anniversary of his death

Postcards from the edge

THE 24-hour delivery of a postcard from Perth, Australia to a pensioner in Devon may be a record; personal experience reveals that Europe has a more cavalier attitude towards holiday mail.

Having recorded the dates of a year's cards sent and received, Hong Kong's service comes out top with an average of two to three days for delivery, and even my messages from Zanzibar took only six days; wish you were heres from Salzburg took four days, Dordogne five days, Greece a week, and even within Britain three to four days was par for the course.

The worst culprits: out of five postcards sent from Otranto in Italy, three were never seen again and the other two took three weeks to arrive. Two pre-stamped cards handed in to a Nairobi hotel did not arrive at all, although a card posted in Madrid at Christmas did — on February 20.

Bastille biking

CYCLING for Softies (0161-248 8282) suggests La Venise Verte as the ideal spot to join France's Bastille Day festivities. In many of its villages you get a double dose of revolutionary celebrations, with fireworks, live music and dancing under the stars starting on July 13, followed by picnics and parades on July 14.

The Venise Verte in the Marais Poitevin is one of the lesser known regions of France. It is criss-crossed by little lanes and a web of 12th-century canals hidden under tunnels of beech and poplar, and is a flat but picturesque landscape that is ideal for cycling novices.

The firm's seven-night "Super Softie" break, based on the village of Celles sur Belle, costs £563 for half-board accommodation, cycle hire and route maps, but not travel to and from France.

■ **TRADITIONAL winter sunshine destinations are being offered at reduced prices in what is their low season from April until the end of June. In Kuoni's (01306 740500) Limited Edition programme, a week's B&B in Luxor costs between £259 and £319; six nights in Cuba's Havana costs £299-£345 or in a Varadero beach resort from £355-£379, both on a room-only basis. There are also savings on holidays to Mexico (from £499), the Maldives (from £529) and Grand Cayman (from £579).**

Late bookings

WITH tour operators already putting "full up" signs at many popular summer destinations, I checked out a few last resorts from the largest tour operator, Thomson Holidays (0990 502555).

Claiming a 20 per cent rise in bookings overall for summer 1997 — fastest sellers being the Balearic islands, Canaries, southern Spain and, after a few years' gap, Italy — it can still offer space on the sand in the Greek islands: a June week on Kos, the birthplace of Hippocrates, costs £300 B&B. In Spain's Almeria, an August half-board week costs around £380. In Croatia, a week's half-board costs £400-£440 in either picturesque Rovinj or the old Austro-Hungarian aristocratic holiday favourite of Opatija.

Further afield, the Dominican Republic is a longhaul bestseller that is already 70 per cent full, and you may have better luck with Mexico, Jamaica or by flying to Florida from a regional British airport. A fortnight's package to Orlando in early July, departing from Cardiff, costs £565 (based on four sharing on a room-only basis).

■ **THE International Otter Survival Fund (01471 822487) is running five-day otter watching trips to the Hebridean islands of Skye and Raasay between May and October. On the west coast of Scotland otters are not nocturnal, and with patience and luck it is possible to watch them fishing and playing in the lochs. The price of £325 includes full board and daily excursions with a professional guide.**

JILL CRAWSHAW'S TRAVEL TIPS

Historic homes

WELL-KNOWN for its British collection of forts and follies, the Landmark Trust, the charity that rescues historic buildings and lets them out for holiday rent, also has foreign properties.

In Italy, these include 26 Piazzi di Spagna, the apartment sleeping four in Keats's former house in Rome — he died on the floor below in 1821 — which costs £1,134 a week (per property); and Villa Saraceno, the 16th-century Palladian villa in Vicenza that exemplifies all the characteristics that English architects learnt from the master himself, Andrea Palladio. The villa costs from £3,283 a week and can accommodate 16 people.

Naulakha, Rudyard Kipling's former New England home in Vermont, was built in 1893 when he was still entranced by the countryside of his new wife's family, although homesickness drove him back to Britain. Eight people can rent the home for £890-£1,328 a week.

The Landmark Handbook costs £8.50, refundable against booking from the Trust (01628 825925).

■ **No trip to Scotland is complete without a visit to a distillery and some serious sampling. Details of the 42 distilleries that welcome visitors, including those with facilities for disabled people, are available from the Scotch Whisky Association (0171-629 4384). An interesting phrase recurs in 22 of the 42 listings: "Admission charges with redemption in shop". What can they mean?**

Sea stories

THEMED cruises will take place on Cunard's (01703 634166) *QEII* this summer. Television chef Gary Rhodes and wine expert Charles Metcalf will be the guest lecturers on the transatlantic voyage between Southampton and New York from June 6-12; on a "Chefs de Chefs" cruise from August 24-30, the personal chefs of some of the world's leaders (including the Queen, President Clinton and President Chirac) will tempt passengers with their recipes.

During a July cruise around some of Scandinavia's fiords, Yorkshire artist Ashley Jackson will be the guest lecturer, while darts takes centre stage on a transatlantic crossing from August 24 to September 4, with Eric Bristow and Keith Deller. The 14-night Scandinavian cruise starts at £1,595, the six-night transatlantic crossings from £1,265.

Driving range

THE 14 remaining Grand Prix events, as well as the Le Mans 24-hour race, the Indy 500 and the Goodwood Festival of Speed, are all in Page & Moy's (0116-250 7007) Motor Racing Tours programme. For those who want hands-on experience, a Commando Day break at Mallory Park on June 7 and December 6 includes driving an Alvis Stalwart amphibious vehicle, an Abbot tank and Honda Pilot Dune Buggies. The cost is £165.

VIC VERLINDEN

Exploring the Red Sea: Egypt is controlling its dive sites

Poorly trained and over-equipped novices on diving holidays are destroying rare marine life

We're killing off our coral seas

The ever-growing popularity of recreational diving is good for business — but not for the coral reefs and their inhabitants. With bigger, more fuel-efficient aircraft, cheaper tickets and dive centres booming everywhere, divers travel ever more frequently, in larger numbers, further and further away to the last unspoilt places in the world.

As if that is not enough, there are new big boats almost everywhere to take divers to the most remote and inaccessible virgin reefs. A few are ecologically aware; most, unfortunately, are not.

They arrive in the mid-Pacific or the central Red Sea with perhaps fewer than 15 dives logged and the printer's ink still wet on their certification cards, armed with video systems and cameras that make Jacques Cousteau's equipment look like toys. With no knowledge of marine life or buoyancy control, they damage and destroy the reefs and bit by bit, day by day, they eventually frighten the marine life away.

In Egypt, on the Sinai peninsula, the booming diving trade has got so busy that dive sites have to be policed and prior booking has to be made with the local authorities to go to a selected dive site. And if one wishes to see sharks — it's too late. They have all swum away to quieter areas. I visited Sudan last year and was deeply saddened by the amount of damage being done to some frequently dived reefs there.

Sha'ab Rumi and Sanganeb reefs are among the richest in the Red Sea and, according to popular belief, they are little known and rarely dived. This is far from the truth. At the time of my visit there were possibly up to ten live-aboard boats operating out of Port Sudan — not bad for a country that is still in a state of civil war.

Most of the divers seemed to be Italian and many were apparently experiencing their first tropical dives. Corals were being hung on to and dislodged in the strong currents, fragile staghorn and fire corals were being broken into pieces by careless fin kicks or being landed on as a result of poor buoyancy control.

A diver was seen to sit on a large brain coral to pose for the camera. Photographers regularly sit, lie or kneel on corals while taking photographs. In one case I observed a pair of divers remove large chunks of the reef to get a closer view of a moray eel hiding in a crevice, only to find the eel swim off in a panic.

Much worse: at the Cousteau Precontinant II study area, on Sha'ab Rumi reef, many of the corals are dead. Some of the extremely large table corals that look so beautiful in Andre Ghisotti/Alessandro Carletti's book, *Red Sea Diver's Guide*, stand now as great, lifeless skeletons.

Yes, there still is a lot of coral there but it is soft coral, *Lithophyton arboreum*. This is an aggressive grower that takes particularly well in areas where there is no competition, notably on dead corals.

In the Mediterranean there is also a problem, again with recreational divers. Although there are no coral reefs, there are many "ahermatypic" corals. These are solitary, non-reef building corals that grow mostly in shaded areas such as cave entrances or on rocky overhangs.

All along the rocky Mediterranean coastlines there are uncountable crevices, caverns, rocky overhangs and permanently shaded walls, areas that sustain a prolific growth of delicate bryozoans (sea mosses), ahermatypic corals, fan worms, anemones and sponges.

The Mediterranean, with its warm waters and relatively short flight times from most of Europe, attracts divers by the thousands each summer. Indeed, many may learn to dive here. But, once again, lack of knowledge and poor buoyancy control lead to no end of this fragile environment being damaged. Fin kicks and cylinders hitting the cave ceilings break away the sea mosses and corals on a daily basis.

Areas frequently visited by divers result in large pockets of waste air accumulating under these overhangs. This air sometimes stays for hours or even days before filtering through the rock, also causing the death of many anemones, corals and sponges.

During the past few years, much has been written on this subject and in some countries action is being taken to control diving activities, such as in Egypt. Many dive centres try to make their divers more aware, but little or nothing is being done.

It is time for all concerned, from certification agencies, diving schools, diving instructors and even travel organisations, to take a long and serious look at these problems. A complete revision in training programmes for divers is urgently needed.

Much more time should be spent on buoyancy control training, for example, and certainly a large part of any diver's course should include education to make everyone more aware of the marine life around them.

FRANCIS ABBOTT

I want to see Pompeii – slowly

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE growing numbers of active senior citizens seeking bungee jumping or scuba diving holidays has seen tour operators catering extensively for demand in recent years. The sector is complemented by the backbone of coach tours and escorted groups available for holidaymakers of advancing years.

However, *Times* reader Jean Lefley does not want any of these options. As a single person, she wants to travel abroad and at a pace where she can "relax and potter". She wanted to visit Pompeii but could not find a tour operator who offered the site without it being part of a demanding itinerary.

"It is all right if there are two of you who can arrange a holiday tailored to your own requirements and pace. But for the solitary traveller, there is nothing designed for those who would like a less demanding schedule and a much more leisurely pace.

"I have had to take holidays abroad which are too busy and miss out some of the excursions, even though I have paid for them as 'included' in the considerable cost of the holiday."

Miss Lefley, of Stanmore, Middlesex, has developed an Italian passion late in life. She is aware of Page & Moy coach tours — "which I would hate, sightseeing and constant moving from place to place" — and Saga, "possibly all right for the newly retired in good health".

A slower paced Italian odyssey for the less energetic traveller may prove difficult to find. Explore Worldwide, which includes many "easy" holidays in a brochure of 170 different options, has an eight-day tour based on Naples and Sorrento which includes Pompeii.

The average escorted group is between 18 and 22 people with visits to a number of archaeological sites. But there is travelling every day on the itinerary. Travers Cox, the managing director, says: "Our tours are structured, the sightseeing is planned and there is not a lot of free time. She could opt out but it defeats the object.

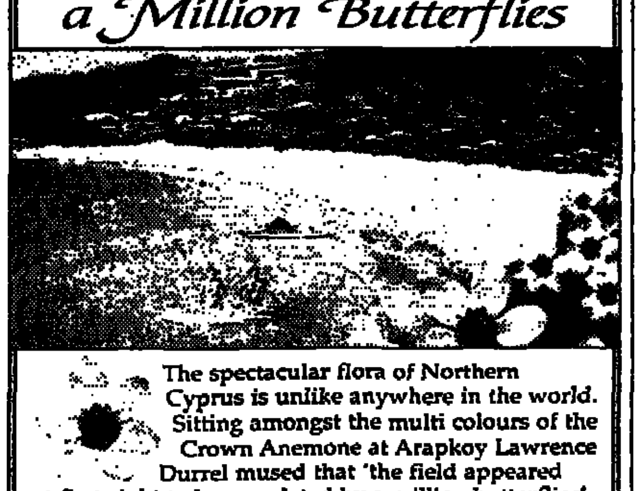
"On longer trips we build in the odd day off, but on shorter, archaeological trips the itinerary is completely full. She is a bit in-between — perhaps she could look at other parts of the world with not so much movement built in."

Sunvil Holidays also runs escorted tours and is mindful of the energy levels of many clients. Dudley der Parthog, the director, says: "A lot of tours are for the elderly market, so we are not going to let them come home exhausted." However, Sunvil's definition of relaxed is still unlikely to match that of Miss Lefley's. Its ten-night tour of Cyprus, for example, involves stays in five hotels.

A cruise is the choice of many energetically challenged holidaymakers, with Swan Hellenic and P&O Cruises among those combining on-board lectures with shore excursions. But a land-based holiday is more of a problem. John Kirk of VFB Holidays, which specialises in escorted groups to France, says: "With the best will in the world, we want to accommodate people. But if it is not suitable, or it will hold other people up, then we tend to say 'no'.

"I think Miss Lefley would be much better suited with a standard package holiday where she can pick up the daytrip options she requires."

● *We welcome letters on holiday travel. Send them to Letters, Travel Department,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN, or fax 0171-782 5124.*



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Italy: A three-page special starts with an upwardly mobile home at Eurocamp; plus wine-lovers' countryside

The caravan site for sore eyes

Chiantishire is chic. Chiantishire is charming. Chiantishire is middle England's idealised vision of abroad. Indeed Chianti is the countryside they are keen to copyright. Could it possibly be right, then, to go and camp right in the middle of it?

To one whose middle-class ambitions had often focused on a prolonged sojourn — perhaps retirement — in some dream Tuscan farmhouse, the proposal smacked of sacrilege.

If not quite stealing beauty (to smuggle in the name of a recent film in which Tuscany's photogenically rolling countryside commandeered the starring role), this was decidedly getting beauty on the cheap. I need not have worried. In the event the Girasole camping centre, up a side road from Figlione Valdarno, gave fulfilment to the more modest aspects of my dreams without spoiling anyone else's.

The site is large, but in its older section, established 20 years ago, already blanketed in trees. Even the more recently installed, and still rather raw looking, gravel terraces on which our Eurocamp mobile homes were stationed didn't block anyone's view.

The single picturesque Tuscan villa on the pine-clad shoulder of hillside overlooking the camp was the Villa Norcenni, owned by the campsite proprietors and let by them as holiday apartments to tourists who would not go without the security of four walls.

Mobile homes have walls, but they are thin ones. Only Japanese paper ones come thinner. Many mobile homes are, of course, anything but mobile. Eurocamp's stay where they are put, complete with shower and toilet, gas cooker, fridge, and sitting room, atop a redundant undercarriage, like neatly arranged chalets on wheels.

Pull-out beds and bunks make a sleeping capacity, it is claimed, of eight, but that is horrible to contemplate. Two of us with one small bedroom apiece were perfectly comfortable. Three, or even four who knew each other well and got along reliably, would have been tolerable. After that, I imagine, horror stories begin.

Proper campers go under canvas. The tents, in fact, are better ventilated and insulated than the mobile homes, and are cooler by day and warmer at night. Truly mobile homes, though, particularly those belonging to Dutch, German and Swiss families, get to be very grand, cruising from site to site carrying a shed full of mountain bikes, a party-sized barbecue or two, satellite television and all manner of home comforts down, quite possibly, to a built-in Jacuzzi.

Camp sites are convivial places. Noises one heard were sometimes not from one's own caravan, but from next door. Without exception, though, the off-peak season visitors were quiet and considerate.

A site rule forebade vehicles entering after 10.30pm (some summer Germans and, sadly, Brits having sometimes abused a come-and-go-as-you-please regime). So our hotch-potch of tents, vans, pavilions, Portakabins and trailers in the Tuscany sunshine resembled a well-ordered suburb, with two restaurants, a post office, a supermarket, souvenir shops, a public baths, tennis courts, football pitches, bowling greens, riding stables and swimming pools. There were no untoward disturbances, unless one counted a rowdy but good-natured bunch of young Italians from Figlione who chose the camp's excellent Taverna as the venue for a send-off to one of their number who had been called up for military service.

The site's restaurants were good enough to attract regular local custom. The chefs, Paolo Arnetoli and Marinella Raspini, gave cookery classes by special arrangement on two mornings during our stay. Young British mums who discovered the secrets of making *crostini* and *tiramisu* reckoned they were good enough to be on television.

The rest of the camp's crew, though, were a cosmopolitan crowd. The statuesque beauty behind the bar who looked as if she had just stepped out of a Ghirlandaio fresco was a Dane. The Claudia Cardinale lookalike behind the supermarket till was Irish. The barman who made perfect cappuccino was Spanish and the comely waitress was Australian.

Some of the camp rules were strange, none more so than a requirement that anyone using the swimming pool must wear a bathing cap. This applied, I was told, even to men, like me, who were completely bald. The most plausible justification advanced for the rule was that hair clogged the pool's filters, but no one suggested my beard needed wrapping.

By contrast, too, no headgear was available for two other camp pastimes where it might have been thought essential — horse-riding and scooter hire. The Irish Claudia Cardinale confided that her cousin had fallen off one of the scooters — and the doctors at the local hospital had not noticed that she had cracked a knee, a rib and a wrist, overlooking all three while strapping a supposedly strained tendon.

Undaunted by these omens I hired a scooter. The mileometer, speedometer, trafficators and horn did not work, but otherwise it was fine, and as long as one travelled on byroads, proved an invaluable way of getting about the countryside.

Greve in Chianti, with a wide open triangular market place, local hero's statue and traditional *macellaria* selling excellent *salami* and *prosciutto* proved the prize exhibit, but the roads between Radda and Strada were delightful.

I would not have dared ride the scooter into Florence or Siena, though others did, but the camp was linked to the former by bus or by rail from Figlione. One English couple were using the camp as a base for their detailed exploration of Florence, having decided that it was both more economical and congenial than staying in town.

Tuscany is so rich in treasures that it becomes impossible to nominate favourites, but after the crowds in San Gimignano no one should miss Monteriggione, the perfect little fortified hilltop town that has scarcely altered since Dante described it in his *Inferno*. We had commendable meals at Al Marsili in Siena and Da Giannino in Florence. I found myself a well above average lunch at the Vignale in Radda, and we had an excellent dinner with fine wines at the Locanda Borgo Antico at Lucolena, on the way to Greve. Yet the outstanding meal was, appropriately, our last supper, at the Hotel Ristorante Santa Chiara, a restored 16th-century convent in Sarteano.

What we had saved on accommodation also enabled us to buy enough pasta, truffle cream, *salami*, *panforte* and olive oil to last till next spring, when, who knows, we might go camping around Chianti again.

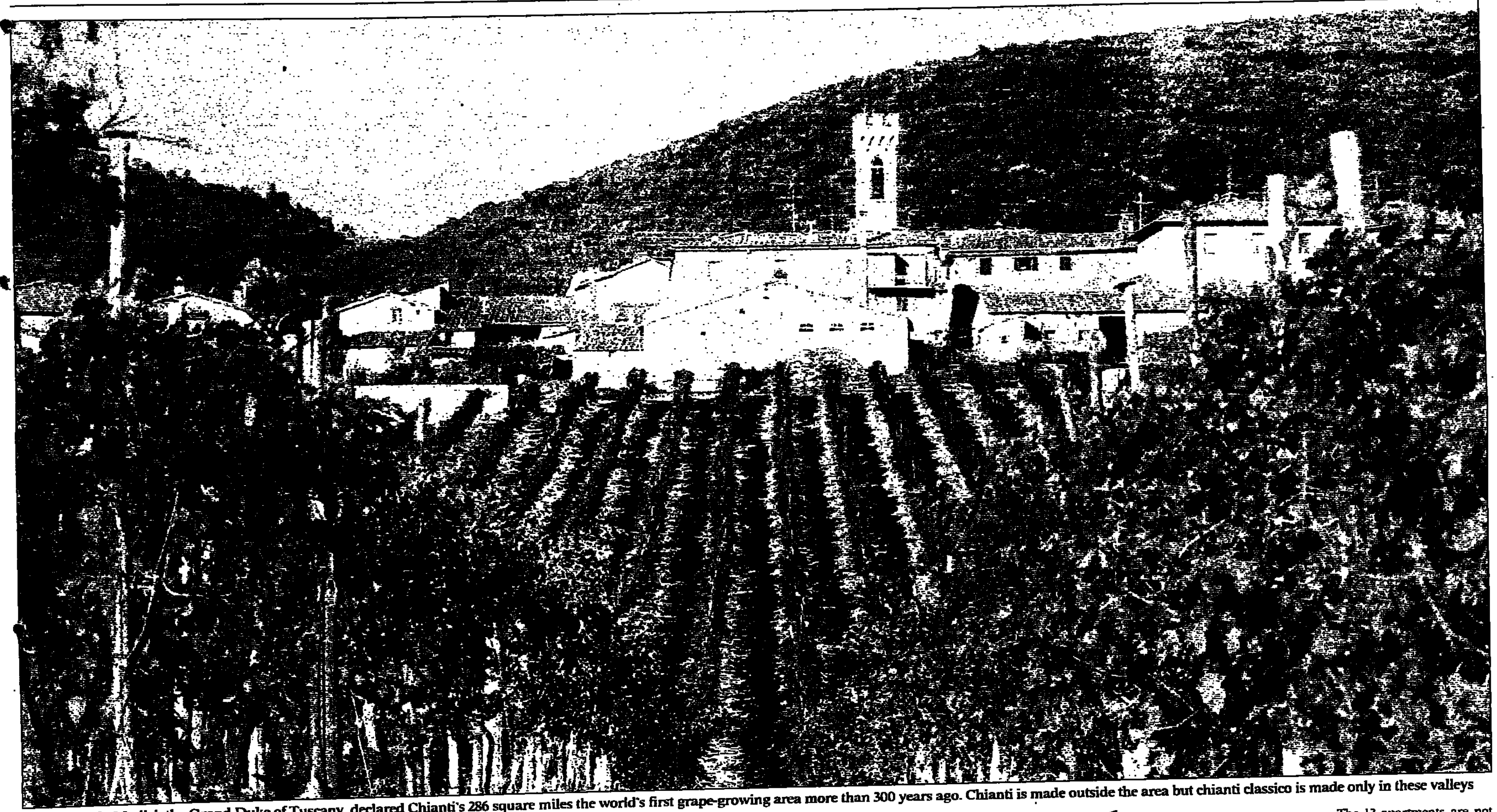
ROBIN YOUNG

● *The author camped at the Girasole centre, Figline Valdarno, as guest of Eurocamp (01565 650022). Mobile homes at the site cost from £465 a fortnight for two adults and up to four children; tents are £269 a fortnight for a couple and up to three children. Both rates include short sea crossings.*

WORLD PICTURES

The Piazza della Cisterna in San Gimignano, left, is a favourite spot for drinking Chianti

MICHAEL SHORT



Cosimo de'Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, declared Chianti's 286 square miles the world's first grape-growing area more than 300 years ago. Chianti is made outside the area but chianti classico is made only in these valleys

Chianti? I'll drink to that

There is no doubt that Chianti is the Italy of Ravello's paintings in the flesh. Here men still walk through the woods to stalk rabbits and the wild boar snuffle along their tiny tracks just as they did five centuries ago when Uccello watched them, and then painted them.

If you take the *strade vicinali*, the neighhourhood roads, that are not intended to join places so much as to give access to scattered houses and wine farms, you can discover an Italy that the flustered crowds beside the Ponte Vecchio will never see.

"Dusty in summer, muddy in winter", as Barry Unsworth describes them on the first page of his magnificent new novel *After Hannibal*. "There are thousands of miles of them wandering across the face of rural Italy. When such a road has reached your door, it has no necessary further existence; it may struggle along somewhere else, or it may not." The *vicinali* provide the key to the secret Italy, the Tuscany beyond the Uffizi — in Chianti.

In Chianti, these winding, often unpaved roads, cart tracks that have etched their way into the heart of the landscape, are called the *strade bianche*, the white roads. They curl as secretly and as sinuously as the tendrils of the vines they pass. Theirs is a world where there is scarcely a telephone pole or electricity cable, let alone a road sign; a world where the lark still sings uninterrupted.

The white roads snake their way throughout the 286 square miles of Chianti, the area Cosimo de'Medici, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, declared the world's first grape-growing area more than 300 years ago. From San Casciano in the north, they wriggle past cypresses and old stone farmhouses south towards Greve and on to the hilltop towns of Castellina, Radda and Gaiole, all of which proudly bear the title "in Chianti" after their name. From there, the *bianche* slither further south to the tiny village of Ponte al Buzzoni, within sight of the turreted walls of Siena.

The *bianche* have hardly changed in centuries. In the first days of October I drove along them gingerly, nursing my hired Fiat Punto between the ruts and stones, bouncing across the tracks in second gear. With the autumn sun filtering through the trees, laying a patchwork of orange and red on the ground in front of me, it was an enchanted journey through the heart of their white magic.

Every twist and turn in the road brought a surprise: an elderly farmhouse dog lying in the sun uninterested in any visitor; a wine tanker parked in the middle of the road for no reason; grape pickers sitting at the roadside eating their picnic lunch and laughing; a priest on a bicycle; the sudden, unexpected resonance of a single bell tolling from a tower.

Sometimes the *bianche* threatened to peter out: the ribbon of rocks and rubble apparently coming to a halt at a precipice or a hairpin. But they never did. Sometimes Tarmac would return for a time, only to disappear again without explanation. But there was always another vista, and always one I had not been expecting.

On occasion, the dark Sangiovese grapes that make 90 per cent of the wine of Chianti would wrap themselves around me like an aristocrat's cloak. But then, just as suddenly, they would disappear, to be replaced by a stunning panorama, such as the one across to the 16th-century abbey at Badia a Passignano, just west of Greve, which shimmered like a Moorish palace in the morning mist. One morning I took the winding Via Chiantigiana north out of Panzano up to almost 1,600 feet, then doubled south again towards the castle of Volpaia, which produces one of the finest chianti classicos. You can buy it from a small shop set into the castle walls on one side of a village square that is scarcely large enough to house half a dozen tables for its one café. I sat there for an hour and watched the inhabitants come and go.

October is the time of the *vendemmia*, the grape harvest, and the locals come to the café to buy bread and talk about the weather. They know the grapes must be picked when they are dry, and juiced quickly if the chianti is to be good. The grapes, and the wine that comes from them, are the staples of Chianti, as are the olives from the trees for their oil.

The producers make the chianti beyond the borders of these narrow, magical valleys at the centre of Tuscany, but not far outside them, and the finest version — chianti classico itself — comes from these valleys alone.

The wine consortium of the region is so proud of its history and its wine that it marks it with the *gallo nero*, the black rooster. This is the ancient emblem of the 14th-century Chianti Military League, which had its headquarters in Castellina in Chianti. Two centuries later, Giorgio Vasari included the rooster in his ceiling painting of the Salone dei Cinquecento in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence.

If you stay in Castellina in Chianti, with its tiny chapel to St Francis of Assisi in its main street, it is less than an hour's drive to Florence. That way, you can sneak up on the city, arriving at 5.30 on an autumn afternoon after a late lunch at an *osteria* on the white roads, and slip into the Uffizi without having to queue.

Then, in the gathering dusk, you can take the autostrada south for a while, before turning east into the Chianti hills again and winding back through Machiavelli's homeland by way of Sambuca and San Donato in Poggio. The plain behind you stretches away westwards towards the setting sun and the towers of San Gimignano fade to shadow on the horizon.

Or you can drive for 40 minutes from Castellina or Radda one morning and experience the splendour of the Piazza del Campo in Siena, before disappearing into one of that mysterious city's side streets for lunch, away from the worst of the crowds. You can be back in Chianti for a siesta by three o'clock, even if you do stop on the way for a grappa in Vagliagli.

I toured the *strade bianche* from a tiny new development just four kilometres outside Castellina called Collelungo, which means "the long hill". Here, 12 individually modelled apartments, all with their own galley kitchens, have been painstakingly created over the past seven years by Tony Rocca, an English journalist, and his wife Mira.

Just a few minutes by car from Castellina, there have been dwellings on Collelungo's 200 acres of woodland, vineyard and olive grove since the Etruscans, but now the entire estate is being restored by the Roccas. The grapes and olives are to be harvested again, and the buildings have been carefully refurbished to retain their original features.

Hidden at the foot of its own two kilometre-long and suitably rutted *strada bianca*, it is one of Chianti's newest secrets and opened its doors for the first time in the spring of 1996.

The 12 apartments are not the tiny attic rooms of Florence, for each has its own terrace and individual bathroom, and a hearth or wood-burning stove. Each also has its own view across the grapes towards the turrets of Castellina and provides an unsurpassable base for discovering Tuscany — and Chianti — in a style that those in pursuit of their own Room With a View over the Arno in Florence will never see.

There could be no finer place from which to prove that Chianti is not, and never has been, a bit of a joke.

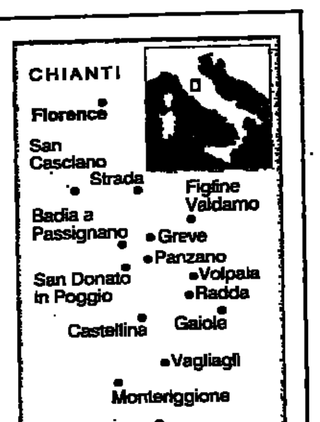
GEOFFREY WANSELL

● *The author was a guest of Cricketer Holidays.*

FACT FILE

■ **Cricketer Holidays** (01892 6642424) offers one and two-week packages to Collelungo. Prices start from £891 for one week, and £1,310 for a fortnight, which includes return daytime flights from London Gatwick to Florence with Alitalia, airport taxes, all transfers, self-catering accommodation at Collelungo and the hire of a group B car from Hertz.

■ **Podera Collelungo**, 53011 Castellina in Chianti, Siene (00 39 577 740489).



■ **Reading:** ***Walking and Eating in Tuscany and Umbria***, **by James Lasdun and Pia Davis (Penguin, £8.99).** ***DH Lawrence and Italy*** **(Penguin £7.99).** ***Tuscany, Umbria and the Marches***, **by Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls (Cadogan, £15.99).**

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WORLD PICTURES

Seen from a boat on the azure sea, or the coast road, Positano is breathtakingly pretty, with its higgledy-piggledy layers of pink, cream and yellow-washed houses clinging to the cliff

Sunday night at San Carlo opera house is a highly social occasion for the Neapolitans. As the lights go down, torches snap on in the six tiers of red and gold boxes and throughout the early evening performance of *Rigoletto* are noisily borrowed, reclaimed and offered to the people behind in order to follow the libretto.

When the wildly popular home-bred baritone Leo Nucci galloped through his third encore of *Vendetta si Tremenda Vendetta*, he had stepped out of the role of tragic father bent on revenge to one of grinning, bowing superstar. Drama swept aside and belief suspended, matrons in black wool suits and tight perms chanted "Verdi! Verdi!"

San Carlo, the pride of Naples since 1737, is famous for its acoustics but, purists be warned, the Neapolitans go to see the opera, not to hear it. Tickets are hard to get, but the rest of the city's great sights are accessible, uncrowded and a delight to visit, thanks to Naples' unhappy reputation for crime and squalor that keep the tour buses away. I spent many hours wandering the steep, narrow streets of the old quarter of Spaccanapoli, and the Spanish steps, once notorious for street urchins, without feeling the slightest bit threatened. Of course, you should take care of your valuables, but the greatest hazards I encountered were being dripped on by the festoons of laundry that block the sky, and near-collisions with fast-moving pedestrians talking over their shoulders. Either the Vespa-riding bag-snatchers and pickpockets had given it up for Lent, or Naples has indeed become visitor-friendly once more.

Once a high spot on the Grand Tour, the home town of Sophia Loren, Enrico Caruso and the pizza, and where Nelson fell for Emma Hamilton, Naples is both ancient and modern, with fine churches, museums, restaurants, smart shops and wonderful views. Beneath Vesuvius, it spreads over steep hills down to a double bay. The recently renovated Capodimonte museum was originally built as a palace to display Charles of Bourbon's china collection. Its galleries now house a magnificent art collection, including works by Titian, Caravaggio, Goya and Botticelli. The palace is in a large park with a splendid view. Another fine view is from the Museo Nazionale di San Martino, which has an amazing collection of Christmas cribs. The vast Museo Archeologico Nazionale has the greatest collection of Roman art in the world, much of it salvaged from Pompeii.

From the tourist office in the corner of Piazza Gesu Nuovo, start a walk of the old centre, called Spaccanapoli after the main street that once split Naples. In the Chiesa di San Lorenzo Maggiore, see the Naples sandwich — the remains of the Greek agora, then the Roman forum, including shops layered beneath the 13th-century church.

Whichever way you turn there are churches containing splendid decorations and startling relics. The Sansevero chapel combines both. First marvel at the veiled Christ, sculpted in translucent alabaster then go down to the crypt.

Here, stand with wide-eyed schoolchildren before the display cases containing what claim to be two complete human cardiovascular systems — a gory web of preserved veins — removed from their bodies by an alchemist. Recover from the experience around the corner in the peace of the cloisters of Santa Chiara, decorated with ceramic tiles depicting scenes from the nuns' lives.

When the pleasure of walking wears off, the way to get up the hills is by funicular railway, more fun than taking the bus, though the bus routes cover more ground.

An alternative to staying in noisy Naples is to base yourself in quaint, easy-going Sorrento, across the Bay of Naples. Despite being perched on the most beautiful stretch of coast in the Mediterranean, Sorrento it is not the place for a beach holiday. Best visited in spring and autumn when it is less hot and crowded, it makes a good centre for day trips.

Frequent trains on the Circumversuviana railway go to Naples in an hour. The same train takes you to Pompeii — always a busy site but less so during the midday-3pm lunch period — and Ercolano station for Herculaneum, preserved for posterity by a river of mud after the same eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 that covered Pompeii in ash.

Hydrofoils serve Capri, where visitors flock to the Villa San Michele, built by Dr Axel Munthe on the site of a Roman villa, which has Roman statues and a magnificent view.

Buses from the railway station go to Positano and Amalfi along the coast. In high summer Positano is popular with rich Italian holidaymakers. It was a postwar haven for artists and writers, most famously John Steinbeck. Now its steep, crooked streets are filled with shop doors covered in flapping beachwear, and day-trippers jostle for the limited space on which to sit, lie or stand. Yet seen from the coast road, or from a vessel on the azure sea, it is breathtakingly pretty with its higgledy-piggledy layers of pink, cream and yellow-washed houses clinging to the cliff. Zeffirelli and Sting have villas there.

On ten miles to the less claustrophobic and more historically interesting village of Amalfi, once the greatest trading port of southern Italy.

The cathedral, one of the few remaining relics of the town's 11th-century heyday (most of it slid into the sea during the earthquake of 1343) dominates the main square, named after Flavio Gioia, the inventor of the compass. It is a Battenburg cake of a building in blocks of black and white check stone. The byzantine cast-bronze doors lead to an incongruous baroque interior. In the crypt is the head of St Andrew and next door the Chiostro del Paradiso; the Moorish cloisters house fragments of old Amalfi, sarcophagi, frescoes and mosaics.

Historic, romantic Amalfi

In the main square is the bus stop for Ravello, and just when I thought the next hairpin bend would be my last, the bus deposited us nearly 1,000ft up the rock face at the edge of the delightful, traffic-free village that most tourists never see. There are two good reasons for going up there before lunch. One is the stomach-churning journey and the other is the *Menu Degustetione* at Palazzo della Marra, whose awful pink paintings are more than made up for by course upon course of delicious dishes adapted from old local recipes. For the less hearty there is a *Menu Tipico*.

There are two wonderful gardens in Ravello in which to walk off your lunch. The half-ruined Villa Rufolo, where its last resident, Wagner, found inspiration for the magic garden in *Parsifal*, and which is host to a music festival each summer, has lovely views and flower and fountain-filled terraces. Villa Cimbrone is another haven of tranquillity, with gardens laid out at the turn of the century by the eccentric English Lord Grimthorpe.

Or stroll along Via S. Giovanni del Toro to see palazzos converted into hotels, such as Hotel Caruso where Greta Garbo spent a summer with Leopold Stokowski and was besieged by the world's press, and the Hotel Palumbo, which has Baroque frescoes.

Return to base in Sorrento to recuperate from so much sightseeing. With a refreshing lack of architectural or archaeological wonders that must be seen, it is a wonderfully relaxing place to stay.

The cathedral, bell tower and museum are all there if you want them, but ambling about in the old quarter you can discover for yourself many little churches and old houses. Best of all is the green and yellow-tiled cupola of the Sedile Dominova, now a working men's club. With open arches on three sides, it provides a living tableau of cloth-capped elders playing cards under a frescoed ceiling. Passing in front of it, Via S. Cesare has many little shops selling handsome, long-stemmed artichokes and tomatoes on the vine.

Days in the Hotel Vittoria Excelsior, built on the spot where Emperor Augustus had his holiday villa, make a delightful change from gadding about. Purpose-built in 1834 and still family-owned, it is centrally placed between the main square and the port, yet buffered from the hurly-burly by a citrus-tree-lined avenue. The hotel is grand but not stuffy. Its airy Art Deco reception rooms are comfortable and uncrowded.

Beneath the dining room's richly frescoed ceiling we helped ourselves from the breakfast buffet.

The hotel terrace, with Roman busts on the balustrade, overlooks the port, and while the less fortunate have to totter up and down hundreds of steps, Vittoria Excelsior residents take the hotel's private lift.

Below await the stripy blue and white deckchairs and postcard stand of Bar Ruccio, which serves perfect cappuccino to sip while watching others take the ferries that ply between Naples and Capri.

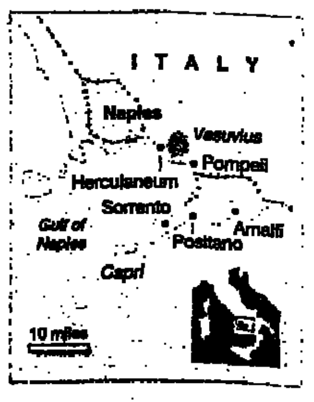
CAROLINE HENDRIE

● *The author was a guest of Italian Escapades.*

NAPLES AND SORRENTO FACT FILE

■ Italian Escapades (0181-748 2661, brochures 01233 211612) offers a two-centre break staying at the Excelsior Vittoria, Sorrento, for four nights, and the Hotel Paradiso, Naples, for three nights from £744, including half-board in Sorrento, B&B in Naples and return flights from Gatwick.

■ Naples-only breaks are available from £274 for three nights, B&B and return flights. Three nights at the Excelsior Vittoria in Sorrento costs from £523 for half-board and flights.



■ Tickets for the San Carlo opera must be booked in advance by Italian Escapades as part of a package. For opera tickets only, call Liaisons Abroad on 0171-376 4020.

■ What's on in Naples: get a free copy of *Qui Napoli* magazine, in English and Italian, from the tourist office in the corner of Piazza Del Gesu.

■ Over 60s and under 18s are admitted free to state-run historic sites and museums, including Pompeii and the National Archaeological Museum in Naples on presentation of passport.

■ Reading: *Bay of Naples and the Amalfi Coast*, by Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls (Cadogan, £8.99). *Ramage in South Italy*, by Edith Clay (Academy, £9.50). *The Island*, by Gustaw Herling (Harvill, £6.99).

■ Restaurants: Naples — Bersagliera, Borgo Marinaro: traditional and expensive, very good fish. Pizzeria Brandi, Salita Sant'Anna Di Palazzo 112: established 1780, birthplace of the Margherita pizza: lively atmosphere, perfect pizzas. Gambrinus, Art Nouveau café, opposite Teatro San Carlo at the end of Via Chiaia: good coffee, cake and ice-creams. Sorrento — the Ristorante Caruso: good fun for a slap up dinner to the strains of Enrico on a gramophone. Pa Gigino: friendly, good value pizzeria. Ravello — Palazo Della Marra: gastronomic menu, medieval recipes.

■ Italian State Tourist Office, 1 Princes Street, London W1R 8AY (0171-408 1254).

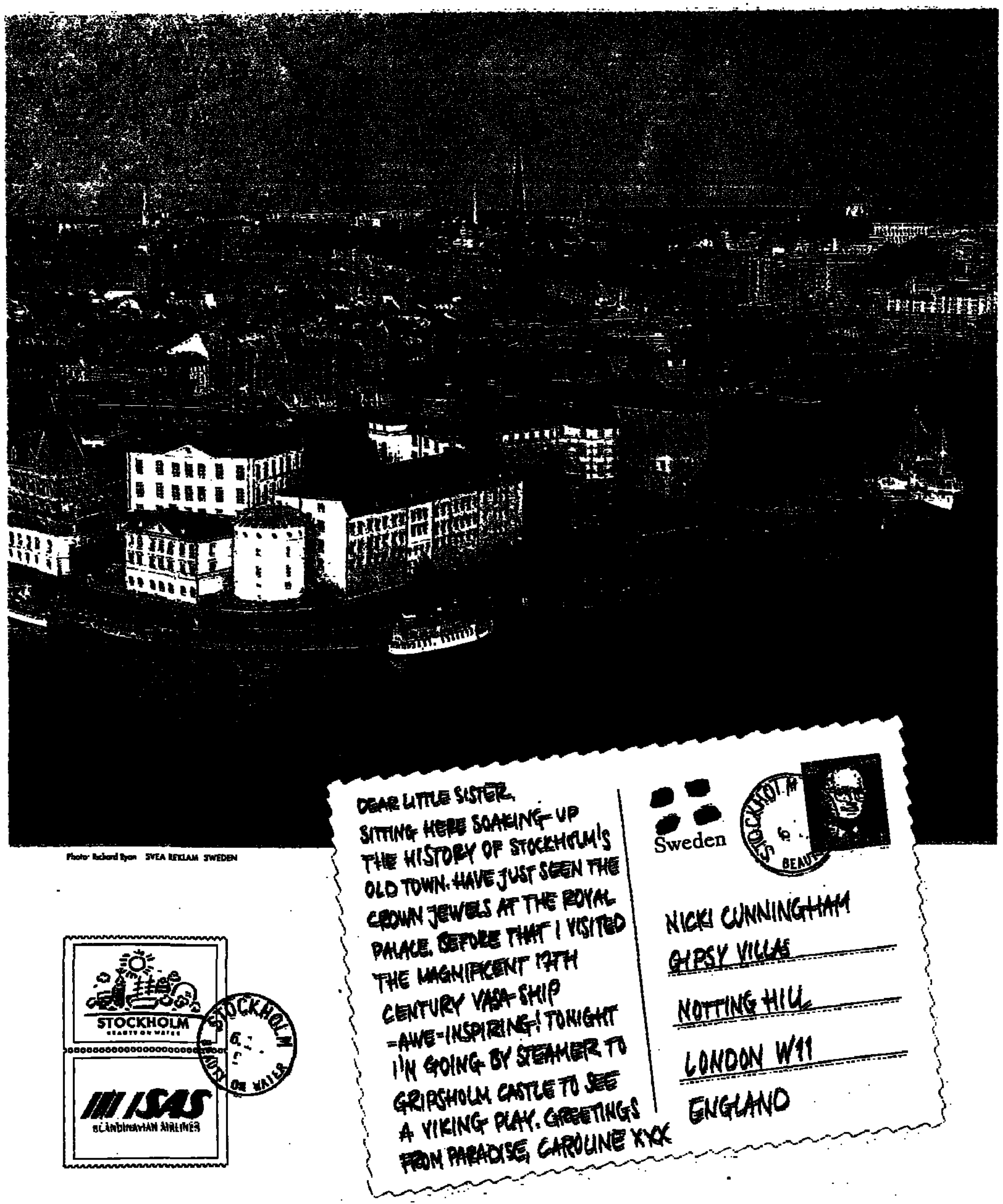

Stockholm. If you want to impress your friends.

Photo: Richard Ryan SVEA REKLAM SWEDEN

DEAR LITTLE SISTER,
SITTING HERE SOAKING UP THE HISTORY OF STOCKHOLM'S OLD TOWN. HAVE JUST SEEN THE CROWN JEWELS AT THE ROYAL PALACE. BEFORE THAT I VISITED THE MAGNIFICENT 17TH CENTURY VASA SHIP – AWE-INSPIRING! TONIGHT I'M GOING BY STEAMER TO GRIPSHOLM CASTLE TO SEE A VIKING PLAY. GREETINGS FROM PARADISE, CAROLINE XXX

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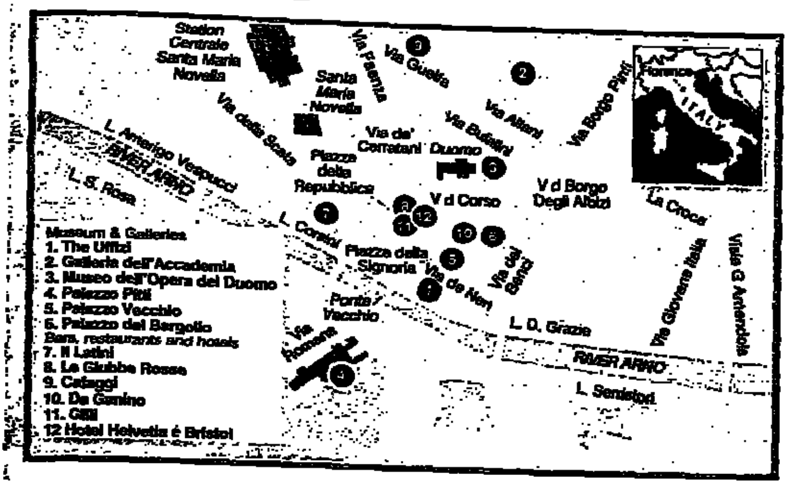
… to the bustle of Florence, which enchants the eye – and empties the wallet

High art seen with hard cash



Free for all: copies of famous Renaissance statues can be seen in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence

A long weekend in Florence, where there is so much to see, means time is precious, so it is essential to book through an agent who knows enough to organise flights that do not arrive in the middle of the night.

This is not as simple as it may sound, because Florence airport falls well short of coping with tourist traffic, even in the off-season. An alternative is to fly to Pisa and then catch the train to Florence that leaves every hour. This is what Kirker Holidays did for us with trouble-free travel vouchers that took us all the way to the five-star Hotel Helvetia e Bristol just off the Piazza della Repubblica.

A short, acclimatising stroll took us almost immediately to the Duomo. There was an inevitability about this. The domed cathedral, with its multi-coloured but predominantly white marbled exterior, commands the city like no other building. It is not just the size that impresses: rather it is the realisation that this awesome creation of the medieval imagination is the starting point for a cultural awakening that was to put Florence at the heart of the Renaissance.

Not far away is the Bargello, once the city hall, later a prison, now a museum packed with Renaissance sculpture. Here is Donatello's bronze of David preparing to face up to Goliath, a recurring subject in Florentine art and one that inspired Michelangelo's supreme achievement. What is fascinating is the contrast between the two. Donatello's version, cast in the 1430s, shows a chit of a boy, almost camp in the way he stands; hand on waist, eyes lowered, his left leg slightly bent at the knee.

Seventy years on, Michelangelo's David, in the Galleria dell' Accademia, exudes power. This David, we are sure, will be more than a match for any giant. Now surrounded by a security screen, David shows the wounds caused by vandals and madmen including, incredibly, two carefully carved initials M and N on one thigh. But nothing can detract from this masterpiece, a justification in itself for visiting Florence.

A pause for contemplation (Michelangelo has that effect) leads to the nearest coffee bar. But it is at this point that culture and commerce can overlap to the detriment of spiritual comfort. The cafés that front on to the tourist tracks are hideously expensive. At the famous Gilli restaurant on the Piazza della Repubblica, a drink in the noonday sun can set you back a fiver at least.

Take time to wander the side streets where the little bars attract a predominantly Italian clientele. In any bar or restaurant, if the customers are all fellow tourists you can be sure the prices will have escalated accordingly. Random exploration also brings other rewards: the discovery of tree-lined squares and stone houses little altered after 400 years, and tucked-away churches with frescoes and sculptures that barely rate a mention in the guidebooks.

Our daughter's flat on Piazza della Santissima Annunziata faces a masterpiece of clean-lined classic design which turned out to be Spedale degli Innocenti, Europe's first orphanage. At one side of the portico is the rota, a rotating stone cylinder where mothers put unwanted babies. Whenever the stone turned, the orphanage had another mouth to feed. Above the arches are 15th-century terracotta discs of babies in swaddling bands. It is altogether an inspiring sight but one that needs searching out.

Another warning: before setting off to walk around Florence, be aware of the neurotic relationship between pedestrians and drivers on either four or two wheels. They all go at each other as if in an arena. The contest is made more exciting by the Florentines' addiction to portable telephones which tend to occupy pedestrians when they are halfway across the road. Loosely translated, a typical Florentine telephone conversation goes like this: "Hello. This is Andrea. I am standing in the middle of … Aahhhhhh!" Whoever is being called can then use their own portable telephone to ring the hospital for further details.

But what of Florence's great treasures, the target of every coachload of tourists? Patience. We will get to the Uffizi and Palazzo Pitti with their magnificent art collections — but not yet, because the sun is still high and even out of season that means long queues with nothing better to do than watch the pavement artists turn out bad sketches. Better to leave the big collections until later in the day when the crowds disperse. There is still much to see in the open air. The Piazza della Signoria with the Palazzo Vecchio and a square dotted with famous statues is a wanderer's delight, though when we were there extensive excavations were under way around the Loggia dei Lanzi and some of the sculptures had been sent off to the restorers' workshops.

For lunch we found, by chance, a restaurant for real Italians. Da Ganino, on the Piazza dei Cimatori, has marble-top tables with long benches which accommodate as many customers as can squeeze on. A sheet of brown paper serves as a table cloth. By way of an appetiser, a tasty wedge of mortadello was slapped down in front of us, accompanied by a glass of chianti. Remember, this is chianti country. You can have other wines but you pay a hefty premium. The starter was ribollita, a rich soup of cabbage, tomatoes, beans and olive oil. We followed with a traditional pasta that melted in the mouth.

Now is the time to hit the cultural high spots. The Uffizi seems to be the favourite, understandably, since this is where the Medici family, rulers of Florence for 300 years, housed the best part of their fabulous art collection. The Botticelli paintings are what everybody comes to see and even if, like me, you soon tire of flying cherubs delicately veiling their private parts, the colour and the draughtsmanship are a wonder to behold. I just wish I could rid myself of the idea that half the people here are chocolate box designers on a busman's holiday.

The Uffizi is close by the River Arno and the Ponte Vecchio. You can see it is old, 1345 in fact, because it has shops overhanging its entire width. They used to belong to tradespeople such as butchers and tanners who needed a handy waste disposer — the river suited them ideally — but now the bridge is populated by jewellers who never throw anything away even if, looking at some of the gaudy displays, they might well be advised to do so.

And so, weary footed, to the Palazzo Pitti, the Medici palace which looks less like a house than a fortress. But the treasures inside are a colourful and ornate contrast to the harsh exterior. The museums and galleries within the Palazzo Pitti have their own opening and closing times and charge separately. Be prepared. Ready cash is always handy in Florence and never more so than when the entrance turnstiles are clicking.

BARRY TURNER

● *The author was a guest of Kirker Holidays.*

FACT FILE

■ Kirker Holidays (0171-231 3333) offers three-night breaks from £345, including return scheduled flights, bed and breakfast and transfers. Prices staying at the Helvetia è Bristol hotel are from £667 (£579 from November 19).

■ Museum and galleries to visit (opening times can often change without warning): The Uffizi, Loggiato degli Uffizi 6 (closed Mondays). Galleria dell 'Accademia, 60 Via Ricasoli in Piazza San Marco (closed Mondays). Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Piazza Duomo 9 (closed Sundays and public holidays). Palazzo Pitti, Piazza Pitti (closed Mondays). Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria (closed Mondays). Palazzo del Bargello, Via del Proconsolo 4 (closed Sundays and public holidays).

■ Recommended bars and restaurants: Il Latini, Via Palachetti 6 (closed Mondays and either July or August). Noisy and popular, serves Tuscan specialities. Le Giubbe Rosse, Piazza della Repubblica. Cafaggi, Via Guelfa 35r (closed Sundays). Family restaurant serving classic Tuscan food. Da Ganino, Piazza dei Cimatori 4r (closed Sundays).

■ Reading: *Blue Guide to Florence* (A & C Black, £10.99). *Eyewitness Travel Guide to Florence and Tuscany* (Dorling Kindersley, £12.99). *Everyman Guide to Florence* (£16.99). *A Room with a View*, by E.M. Forster (Penguin, £6.99). *Florence — the biography of a city*, by Christopher Hibbert (Penguin, £15).

JILL CRAWSHAW'S ITALIAN TRAVEL TIPS

Garden deluge

THE RENAISSANCE gardens around Rome were often places for frivolous entertainment: pulling hidden levers to soak your guests was a favourite water trick. The Martin Randall (0181-742 3355) one-week Campagna Romana Tour visits the Renaissance "Theme Park at Bomarzo", Cardinal Farnese's villa at Caprarola, and others and costs £1,060 fully inclusive.

Child's play

ITALY's version of Club Med, Club Valtur (with sports, nightly cabaret, children's clubs, unlimited food and wine, and payment by coloured beads) is offered in Apulia, Sicily and Sardinia by Citalia (0181-686 5533). A week at the Club Valtur Ostuni, near Puglia, which has clubs for children of all ages, costs £699-£1,269 per person, including flights and all meals. Children three-11 get a 35 per cent reduction.

Beach life

NEW TO Italiatour (0171-602 6440) this summer: the Riviera d'Ulisse, where beach resorts include Formia, once an ancient Roman holiday favourite, and walled Gaeta, a working fishing port. Midway between Rome and Naples, the resorts are well placed for visiting the Abbey of Montecassino, Caserta, Anzio and the island of Ponza. Rome is about 90 minutes away, Naples slightly more. A week's half board at the Miramare Hotel in Forma, once the summer residence of the Queen of Italy, costs £728-£903 per person. The Villa Irlanda in Gaeta, where a week's half board costs £746-£903, was built over a Roman villa owned by the father of Emperor Augustus.

Theme trip

A FASCINATING collection of themed holidays can be found by delving into various Italian specialists' brochures: "Walking, Mountains, Truffles and Cooking" is offered by Alternative Travel (01865 513333) on its week's autumn trip to Umbria in search of the black *Tuber aestivum* (£995): "Orchid Hunts" in Umbria cost £995. (Fares not included in either trip.) Three nights "Verona Opera and Wine", from Arlblaster and Clarke (01730 893344), celebrates the 75th season with performances enhanced by visits and tastings in Valpolicella country (£799-£829). "Italian Cookery Weeks" with Simply Tuscany (0181-995 8277), with lots of prodding, rolling, kneading and sampling, cost £1,055 per person with full board and flights.

Saddle-up

DISCOVERING 25 miles of Tuscany each day from the saddle of a Maremma horse is a new riding holiday from Inntravel (01653 628811). Based at Montieri, guests ride to villages, estates and monasteries, and gallop through the surf on the coast. Prices from £840 for a full-board week including flights.

Court out

URBINO, Mantua and Ferrara were the most civilised Renaissance courts in Europe. Six-night breaks with Prospect Tours (0181-995 2151) visit all three in May and October, with expert guides. Flights, accommodation with half board and all visits are included in the price of £1,095.

Island idyll

THE AEOLIAN islands rarely appear in British tour bruchures, but Magic of Italy (0181-748 7575) has introduced hotel and self-catering holidays to Vulcano and Lipari, with a week in a studio flat in Lipari costing £515-£669. A week's tour visiting six islands costs £819-£845.

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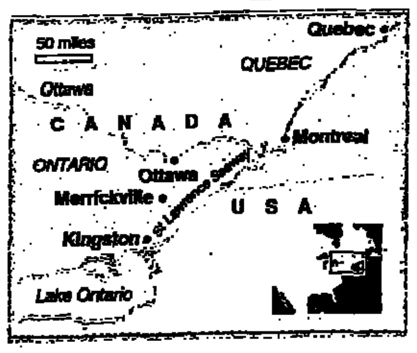
International: From Ontario's tranquil countryside to the splendour of a magnificent Indian manuscript

Rapid action in the great outdoors



Our leader ended his briefing with a po-faced aside: "For the benefit of any Americans present, I will be happy to repeat it at half-speed." Canadians dislike being patronised by their southern neighbours, and are happy to seize any opportunity to return fire. It is good-humoured — *almost*.

The rest of us tittered nervously. Dressed in wetsuits and carrying crash helmets and paddles, we were about to undergo what for most of us was our first experience of white-water rafting. What had promised to be a jolly day out on the river was, after the recital of potential hazards, becoming an increasingly formidable prospect.

Any lingering comparison with a picnic on the Cherwell disappeared as we set forth on the mighty Ottawa River, which for about 400 miles forms the border between Ontario and Quebec before joining forces with the St Lawrence at Montreal. Broad and beautiful, it flows past granite cliffs and evergreen forests, its serenity periodically disturbed by cascades of rapids which provide thrills and spills for tourists and power for a series of hydroelectric generating stations.

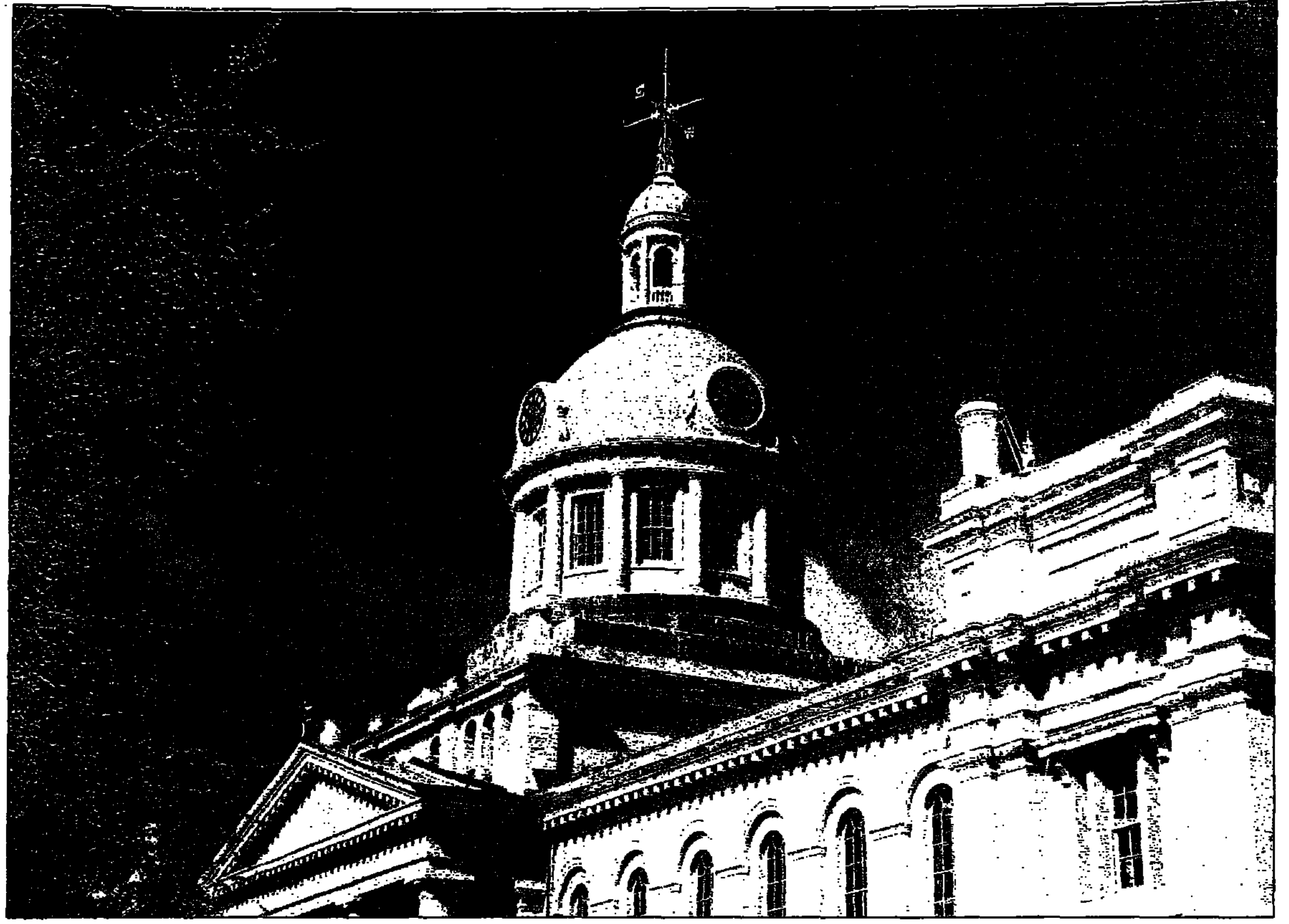
As we approached our first rapid we were urged in parade-ground language to paddle harder and harder; the raft, a large, inflatable rubber dinghy accommodating up to 12 people, must maintain its momentum through the turbulence or the helsman loses control.

A wave of water enveloped us. Two members of our group, who had disregarded instructions to wedge their feet beneath the thwarts, were abruptly swept overboard. Rosie, my daughter, at 23 the youngest in the party, crowed and shrieked with delight.

Her glee was not, alas, shared by her father. Memories of struggling to right capsized sailing dinghies have left me with a strong aversion to sudden dunkings in cold water, wetsuit or no. We paddled ashore to sit on the rocks and get our breath back, while our guide offered any of us who wanted to quit the option of continuing on foot down the river bank — which, he suggested, might prove even more uncomfortable.

For a few moments I toyed with the idea. But no. A man cannot appear chicken in front of his daughter. Besides, we now knew what to expect and, sure enough, each of the subsequent rapids, all given suitably alarming names, became progressively less terrifying. By the time we reached the last and biggest, we had become almost blasé.

PICTURES



Colonial splendour: City Hall in Kingston, situated on the shores of Lake Ontario and no longer living in the shadow of Toronto at the other end of the lake

Safely ashore, we basked in the warm sunshine and a glow of achievement, watching the bucking and twisting of the rafts following astern. French and German tourists, we were told, often asked their guides to arrange deliberate capsizes just for the thrill of it. No wonder the British had a better navy.

Our tour of eastern Ontario had begun on an altogether quieter note in the little town of Merrickville, on the Rideau River, about 50 miles south of Ottawa. Although I had lived in Canada for several years, this region was new to me, a tranquil countryside of woods, dairy farms and slumbering villages.

Sam Jake's Inn, dating from 1861 with elegant colonial verandas overlooking the Rideau Canal, was friendly and comfortable. The town takes its name from William Merrick, one of the brave and determined band of United Empire Loyalists who fled the American Revolution and settled in what was then Upper Canada (Quebec was known as Lower Canada). By the end of the 18th century he had established a thriving sawmill powered by the nearby waterfall.

The canal was the result of the War of 1812. After rebuffing American attempts to "liberate" Canada, the British appointed Colonel John By to build a navigable waterway providing a safe passage between Montreal and Kingston on Lake Ontario. The settlement at the northern end of the canal, named Bytown in his honour, was later renamed Ottawa and designated by Queen Victoria as the new national capital, a compromise between the rival claims of English and French Canada.

Thirty years ago Kingston was a rundown, unprepossessing sort of place, having long since been overtaken in economic importance by Toronto at the other end of the lake. But confidence was partly restored by hosting the yachting events at the 1976 Olympics, and the watefront has been restored to life with hotels, restaurants and marinas.

The immaculately preserved Fort Henry military barracks, high on a hill overlooking the lake, are a deservedly popular attraction. An authentic touch is provided by volunteer "extras" dressed in 18th-century British uniforms. Our guide, a handsome young university student, provoked palpitations among the female members of our party.

From Kingston, in the summer months, there are regular sightseeing cruises through the scenic Thousand Islands strung across the peaceful international border where Lake Ontario narrows into the St Lawrence. A little further downstream is Upper Canada Village, an enchanting recreation of a colonial settlement of the mid-19th century. Eschewing modern audiovisual aids and other interpretative gimmicks, it provides an object lesson in how to bring the past to life.

There are houses and shops, a farm, dairy and bakery, flour mill, sawmill and wool factory, printer, blacksmith and cabinet-maker, post office and tavern, church and chapel. The various buildings are staffed by a mixture of actors playing the parts of settlers, and skilled craftsmen and women dressed in period costumes but running their businesses on strictly commercial lines.

And so on to Ottawa and a big surprise. In the 1960s, Canada's capital seemed to be going nowhere, the seat of an unpopular federal government and little else, unable to compete with the metropolitan sophistication of Montreal or the wealth of Toronto. Federal government is still unpopular, especially in the far western provinces, but Ottawa itself has changed almost beyond recognition.

High on a bluff overlooking the river, the Parliament buildings, modelled on the Palace of Westminster and rebuilt after a disastrous fire at the height of the First World War, dominate the skyline. But since 1988 they have been complemented by the nearby National Gallery of Canada, a soaring glass and granite palace, designed by the Montreal architect Moshe Safdie, which even the grumpiest critics of modern architecture would find hard to fault. A sneak preview of a gloriously eclectic Corot exhibition was a special treat.

In the interests of national unity, federal money has been pumped into the undistinguished French-speaking suburb of Hull, on the opposite side of the river, most notably in the construction of the grandiose Museum of Civilisation. For all the brilliance of the presentation, and its obvious popularity with young people, I found a more evocative recollection of the nation's history in the War Museum, just down the road from the National Gallery.

Ottawa is not just museums, however. With a population of about one million, it is a well planned, spacious, cosmopolitan city with an abundance of good restaurants, shops and hotels. We stayed in considerable luxury at the Château Laurier, one of the chain of former railway hotels which stretch across the country, now lavishly restored by its owners, Canadian Pacific, in a style to match its glitzy past.

Canadians in other parts of the country may thumb their noses, but Bytown has come a long way.

JOHN YOUNG

● *The author was a guest of Ontario Tourism.*

FACT FILE

■ Air Canada (0990 247226) flies daily to Ottawa from the UK for £399 return until the end of May, £429 in June and £511 in July, August and September, booked at least 21 days in advance and with a minimum stay of seven days.

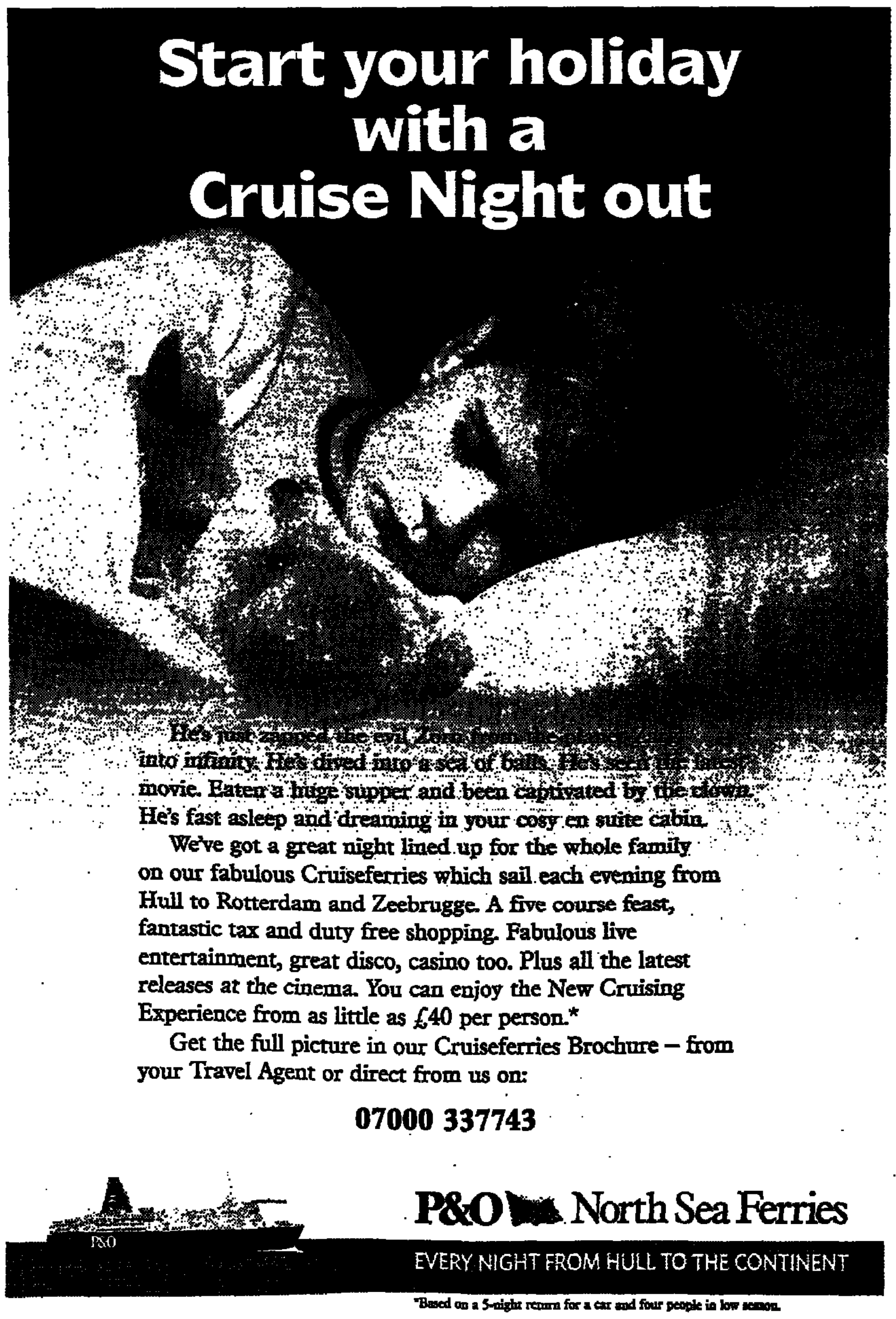
■ Experience Holidays (01323 416699) offers a package tour to eastern Ontario from £715 a person, based on two people sharing a double room, including return flight to Ottawa on Air Canada, two nights' bed and breakfast at Sam Jake's Inn in Merrickville, three nights' room-only accommodation at the Château Laurier and one week's car hire, with insurance and unlimited mileage.

■ Further information from: Visit Canada Centre, 62-65 Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DY (0891 715000, calls charged at 50p per minute).

■ Canadian Pacific Hotels (0500 303030). Information on country hotels in Ontario: Independent Innkeepers Association of Ontario, General Delivery, Grafton, Ontario K0K 2G0.

■ For white-water rafting and other outdoor activities, winter and summer: Wilderness Tours, Box 89, Beachburg, Ontario, K0J 1C0 (00 1 613 646 2996).

■ Reading: *Surfacing*, by Margaret Atwood (Penguin, £6.99). *The Oatmeal Ark*, by Rory Mclean (HarperCollins, £16.99). *Roughing it in the Bush*, by Susannah Moodie (New Canadian Library, £6.99). *Canada. The Rough Guide* (£10.99).



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Glorious story of an emperor

If you have ever been to northern India or are considering a trip there, it is worth hurrying along first to the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace. On show there, but only until April 27, is an Indian manuscript whose paintings have a wondrous beauty. It is on loan from the Queen's art collection.

The book has been unbound so that each of its 46 magnificent illustrations can be hung round the walls ready for curious eyes to pore over the richness and detail, from scenes of hunting to wedding processions, firework parties and sieges of great forts.

After April 27, the manuscript will tour the United States and then return to the Royal Library at Windsor Castle to be rebound. It will probably never be exhibited in public again.

It is called the *Padshahnama*, meaning story of the emperor. And it is just that, recounting the most glorious episodes of the reign of the great Mogul emperor, Shah Jahan. It illustrates the best ones with some of the most detailed, colourful and glowing paintings to have come out of the imperial workshops. It may be the arabesques of a silk carpet, the Benares brocade of a courtier's coat or the simple observations of a farmer ploughing or a man hauling up water from a well.

The whole of Mogul India is here, precise in its tender portraits, in the transparency of fine Dhaka muslin and in the rich palette of hot oranges and reds, rich purples and greens, soft lilacs, yellows and aquamarines.

Shah Jahan, who built the Taj Mahal, was the fifth of the six great Mogul emperors who ruled most of the sub-continent in the 16th and 17th centuries. They lived hard: they were great soldiers, relentless campaigners, often hard drinkers, partial to opium, devout Muslims and, not least, tremendous art patrons.

Shah Jahan was all this. Several paintings celebrate his triumphs over Rajput rulers before his accession; later ones show him presiding over the lavish courts of Agra, Delhi and Lahore, going on a lion hunt, making a pilgrimage to the Sufi saint's shrine at Ajmer, and receiving gifts from Europeans. During his rule from 1627 to 1658, Shah Jahan made India the marvel of all travellers.

With the decline of the Mogul empire in the 18th century the Nawab of Oudh snapped up the *Padshahnama* for a reputed £1,500, a considerable sum. No wonder, too, that in 1799 it was the ultimate diplomatic gift, presented by his son to Lord Teignmouth for George III's extensive library. And when that library was given to the British Museum, the *Padshahnama* was deemed so great a treasure that it was kept back and lodged at Windsor.

LOUISE NICHOLSON

ROYAL COLLECTION

Delivery of wedding gifts: detail from the *Padshahnama*

WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 27

LAMA
(b) Gold or silver cloth, originally made in Spain, the original European depot for the treasures of the New World. In Spanish, literally, plate. "A dress of silver lama over French lilac."

MOORSTONE
(a) A kind of granite found chiefly in Cornwall. 1842: "Moorstone, a species of granite found in Cornwall and some other parts of England, and very serviceable in the coarser parts of a building."

LICKPENNY
(c) Someone/something that makes the money go. Dryden, *Love Triumphant*, 1694: "She has two devils in her eyes; that last ogle was a lickpenny."

MAULSTICK
(a) A stick used by painters as a support for the right hand, and held in the left. The upper end is surmounted by a ball of leather-covered cotton-wool. From the Dutch *maalstok*, *malen* to paint + *stok* a stick. Kipling, The Light that Failed: "I'd let you go to the deuce on your own mahlstick [variant spelling]."

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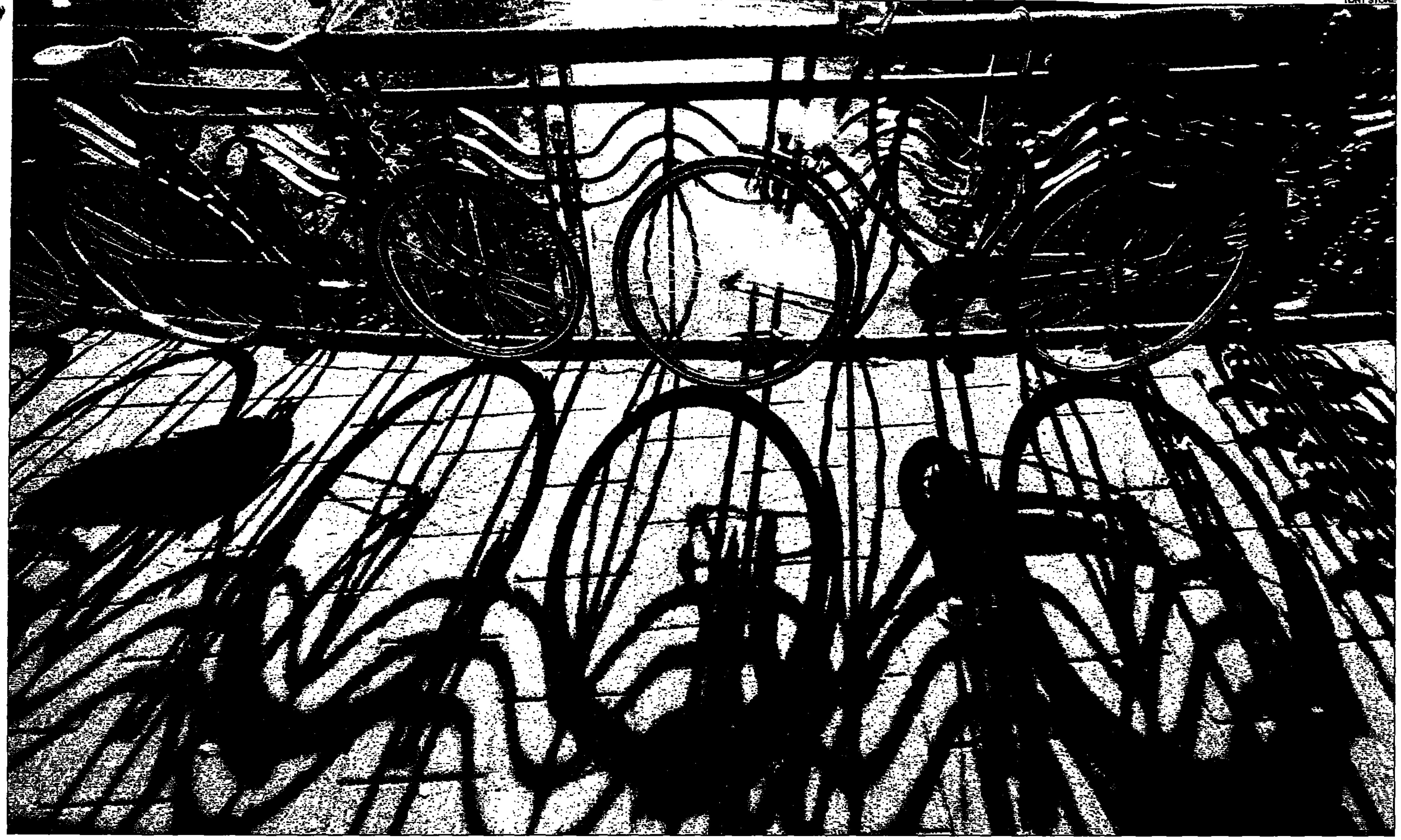
City break: Amsterdam's fine art and friendly people – in spite of its red light area the city is a capital place

TONY STONE



Bicycles are everywhere in Amsterdam but there do not appear to be any laws of the road for cyclists. A lot of them keep to the right and a lot to the left, and tourists have no way of knowing who is going to do what

Lots of bicycles and bare-faced cheek

Amsterdam is a surprise package wrapped in images — your own preconceived images. Most people know it is a city built around a series of canals — 160 of them. The surprise comes from finding out just how much those canals reveal. In a way, they are like the streets and avenues of New York — find one and you ,will find them all. Add a collection of sights on the way and it is, says the city's tourist office, a place where you can see more places of interest than in any other capital in the world.

"Wait a minute," I said to my guide, "Amsterdam isn't the capital, is it? It's The Hague." That's what I was told at school. The Government operates from The Hague. The Dutch Queen lives in The Hague, too. The law courts are there as well. Amsterdam is just. . .the capital. Which gives you some idea of why someone called it The Surprise Capital.

The one thing that is perhaps no surprise is that the authorities try to hide one of its best-known features. "People in Amsterdam," they say, "are not shy." Yet you will find no mention in the guidebooks of, well, let's go back to what the lady in the tourist office assures me they are not shy of.

As she said: "They don't like curtains in their windows and so they don't mind people looking in. Even at night, when they have their lights on, you can take a peek at what is going on behind the glass, look into their rooms and they won't object."

What she really wanted me to do was to study the wooden furniture and the light fittings of which people are so proud. She would rather I had not mentioned the directions to the one window display that every hotel concierge has on his lips as though it were a prerecorded message, the one in which ladies can be seen sitting in various stages of undress. The authorities know that the sex industry brings in a huge amount of foreign capital (more British visitors than any other nationality). There is street after street of it, and it is totally within the law, but the Dutch officials make a valiant effort to pretend that tourists come from the four corners of the world to study their wardrobes.

The tourists also come, of course, to see the tulips, miles and miles of them in fields just a short ride away from the centre of the city. But, naturally, that can only be in season. I have just come back from a stay in which there were no tulips. There were no canal rides either — the waterways were frozen and, just a few weeks earlier, 10,000 people had skated on them in the biggest (and coldest) celebration of its kind in 25 years.

You need at least three days to fit in not just all the sights, but simply to get the flavour of the place, because Amsterdam is not like any other city I know. It has few tall buildings and few wide roads (although they do exist and there is the central Dam Square, from which both the royal palace and the red light district lead).

The inhabitants are friendly. Ask an elderly lady the way to the Van Gogh museum and she will take you there. As the guide said, they are not shy. Sit in a café and the man at the next table will advise you which strudel to choose. Seemingly, everyone speaks English — including the road sweeper who directed me to the restaurant I wanted.

In a way, Amsterdam is infuriatingly different. If you want that cup of coffee, look for a coffee house. A coffee shop is where you go (legally) to smoke cannabis. And the streets are where you try to avoid being run over by a bicycle. People seem to have a built-in radar to spot a silent Raleigh coming from east or west — or, if you cross one of the arched bridges over the canals, from north or south. There do not appear to be any laws of the road for a bike. A lot of them keep to the right and a lot to the left, and you have no way of knowing who is going to do what.

By the canal side, what looks like the pavement is really a road. The pavements are about 18 inches wide and usually blocked by fallen railings, ladders, bicycles and winches used to haul those wardrobes into a top window.

All this seemed to fit in perfectly with the clog shop over the road from the central station. There was a notice on the door — in English, of course: "Please be careful as you come in. There are live chickens walking around." There was also a live turkey. I suppose if I had wanted a pair of clogs, I would have had to find a shop selling chickens.

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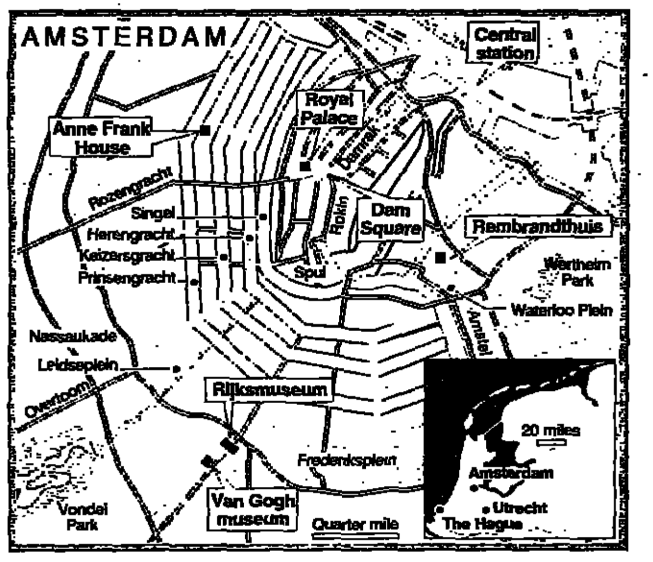

With or without clogs, you should walk. There are taxis — dreadfully expensive — and there are some of the most comfortable trams I have ever known, but you "do" this city on foot. Ask the hotel doorman how to get to the Rijksmuseum and he will tell you it is a ten-minute walk. Want to go to the railway station? That is ten minutes. To the flower market (a must, even out of season)? Ten minutes "no more". To the Anne Frank House? "Down the road — about ten minutes."

I decided to spend the first full day taking ten-minute walks to the museums and tourist spots. The second day was reserved for a train trip out of town. The third was to "mop" up what I had missed so far. It worked well. I went to the Rijksmuseum first — a big railway station of a place (the station itself looks rather like a museum) that boasts one treasure that alone would make visiting Amsterdam worthwhile: Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* is a magnificent canvas covering a vast wall. There are copies everywhere (bizarrely, including one in an adjoining room at this same museum as well as other Rembrandts and works by Dutch masters) but this is all on its own in more ways than one.

The Rembrandthuis at the other end of town, where the artist did much of his work, is fascinating. It is furnished as it was in his day and his early drawings are on show. The only things missing are Rembrandt paintings. All the really good ones, except *The Night Watch*, are in America or at the Hermitage in St Petersburg.

The city does well in recognising its artistic heritage, even though it does charge entry to all the museums (you can buy an Amsterdam pass, which will admit you to most and give discounts at others). At the Van Gogh museum just round the corner from the Rijksmuseum, there are more than 200 pictures including a version of *Sunflowers*. There are also numerous paintings from his "black pallet" period, worked on before he established his own style.

It was, I have to admit, a tram ride away from the museums to the Royal Palace, which the Dutch Queen uses only for ceremonial occasions and which is open to the public most of the year. It is a vast, echoing place that looks like a cross between Harrods food hall and an under-endowed stately home. But you can go into the huge banqueting hall and see the marble-walled room that was once used only for passing death sentences (in the days when this was both town hall and law courts).

Utrecht, half an hour by train away from Amsterdam, was an unexpected revelation on my second day. I had heard of the Treaties of Utrecht — signed after the Wars of the Spanish Succession, although there was no one in the tourist office who could explain what they were about — but not about the long avenue of shops and restaurants along its own canal or about the Barrel Organ Museum.

That was a real surprise. Not just the sort of shabby barrel organs that used to be played on our city streets, but great Wurlitzer-type affairs and organs made 200 years ago, as well as music boxes playing discs and paper rolls that were 100 years old, and a 19th-century jukebox (you put in your money and choose a punched disc and it will play the tune you want to hear). There was one organ from 1910 that automatically played three violins as well as a piano and sounded like a good quartet.

The building the museum occupies is a deconsecrated church — as is the one where the Catherine the Great exhibition is held — which strikes me as a sensible way of keeping open remarkable buildings that have outlived their congregations. I left the National Museum van Speelklok in Utrecht feeling I had had a great afternoon, stopping only once on the way to the station — to listen to a barrel organ.

ROBERT HARDING

The sex industry brings in a lot of foreign capital

There was different music for me later — Schubert's Unfinished Symphony and Mozart's Fifth played by the Royal Orchestra at the Concertgebouw, a superb interpretation in one of the best acoustically endowed halls I know.

Anne Frank House on my third day couldn't have offered a greater contrast. Even in midwinter, people queue to see the place where she and her family lived in hiding and where the diary was written. The house on the Prinsengracht has been renovated, but only to make it safe. The old wallpaper, with the pictures of film stars Anne stuck to the walls, remains but there is no furniture. It was all destroyed when the families living there were rounded up and the building's trustees wanted nothing that was not in place the day the Nazis knocked on the door.

But it is enough to see the bookcase behind which they all hid, to examine the bare sink in the kitchen, where they cooked their meagre meals, and the single lavatory. There are pictures and a video display on the ground floor, showing the Frank family before they were taken off to the death camp.

The Franks, a Jewish family who had fled their native Germany when the Nazis moved in, were latecomers to Amsterdam but the community they joined was one of the oldest in Europe. The candlelit Portuguese synagogue, built in the 17th century, is open to all and is one of the most gracious houses of worship in the city. It was copied in every detail by the people who created what is now London's oldest synagogue, the one opened at Bevis Marks in the City in 1701.

I went to the Amsterdam building after a refreshing walk from the Anne Frank House, stopping to peer into the smart boutiques of the Jordaan area — a cross between Hampstead and Chelsea — to have some of the best coffee (and strudel) I have ever tasted. An hour or so later I sampled a bag of delicious chips from one of the street vendors.

In the evenings I could have taken advantage of one of the eateries of which Amsterdam is particularly proud — those serving Indonesian cuisine — but I chickened out and went Dutch instead.

Three nights in Amsterdam and three different meals, all of them in shabby bistro-like places without cloths on the tables. But if that is the way the people of Amsterdam like their restaurants, I am not going to argue.

At each one, the Lucius fish restaurant, the Restaurant de Roode Leeuw and the Sluizer, meals were beautifully cooked and presented and served by courteous waiters. Was the Dover sole satisfactory? I said it was the best I had ever eaten. In the second restaurant, how about the vegetable soup? I said I was delighted they had left the tureen on the table. How was the omelette at the Sluizer? If I had had room to finish it, I might have been able to convey just a little of how magnificent it was.

My hotel was equally enjoyable. The Pulitzer is a five-star establishment, put together from a series of old houses facing the canal. It has its own boat — when the water is not frozen — an elegant restaurant and a smaller place for coffee or lunch. Every room is different. "We have original paintings here," said the PR lady. "Who knows, you could wake up and find you are sleeping with an old master." Which I thought made a change for visiting businessmen.

MICHAEL FREEDLAND

● *The author was a guest of the Netherlands Board of Tourism and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.*

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- Schipol Airport in Amsterdam has its own railway station from which double-decker trains leave regularly for the 20-minute journey to the centre of the city.
- Rooms at the five-star Pulitzer Hotel (including a large buffet breakfast and free copies of *The Times*) range from 540 guilders (£200) per night for an "exclusive double room" to 390 guilders (£140) per night for a "superior" single room (0031-20-523-5235). A suite costs 1,075 guilders (£398) per night.
- An Amsterdam pass providing discounts at shops, restaurants and for excursions, and free entrance to certain museums and to see diamond polishing in progress, costs 29.90 guilders (£10) from any tourist office.
- Reading: *The Fall*, by Albert Camus (Penguin, £5.99), *Cadogan Guide to Amsterdam*, by Rodney Hague (New Holland, £8.99); *Blue Guide to Amsterdam* (A & C Black, £8.99).

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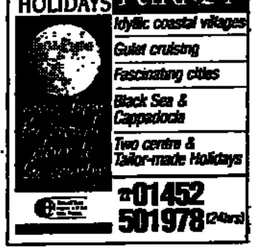

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هكذا من الأصل

Jill Parkin visits the new London Aquarium and **Nigel Hawkes** tries a sporting exhibition at the Science Museum

Where sharks are a bit mean

You have been queueing outside the London Aquarium for a long time, distracting bored children with sightings of London buses on Westminster Bridge and small boats pulling big boats on the river. Once inside, you go through the bag search and pay £20 for your family ticket.

Three floors — 170,000 square feet as the transatlantic voice on the Aquarium's taped phone message tells you — await you.

The children are hungry and you could use a coffee. Do one floor and then have a break in the cafe? The café first? Neither. Once you're in the Global Café and Bar of "the capital's first and only world-class experience of underwater life", there's no going back. Exit only, herded through a narrow gift shop — and no re-admission.

Like some whale swallowing lots of little fish, the aquarium has a simple linear digestion system. In, through and out. No hanging around. And certainly no Jonahs.

The aquarium was opened by the Japanese company Shirayama on Good Friday, in time for the school hols. We gave it a week to settle down. It wasn't enough.

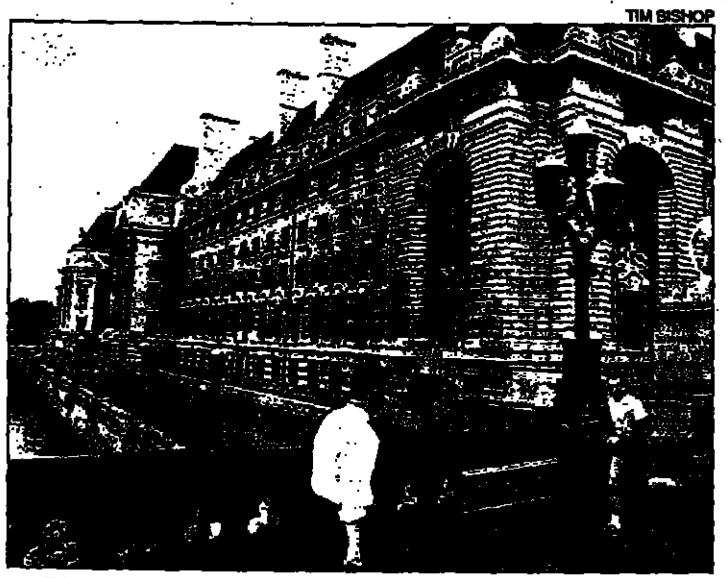
There are some beautiful things on the ground floor, basement, and sub-basement of County Hall, once the home of the disbanded Greater London Council, but we left feeling we'd had rather a mean experience.

It didn't start well. I'm sure that, in their way, rainbow trout are as fascinating as piranhas and giant squid, but the first part of our visit was a bit like a stroll along a supermarket chill cabinet. It's cavernous and very dark. Other aquaria seem to have a better grasp of using spotlights to keep fish and folk happy. You're always aware of being in a London basement. It seems little attempt has been made to re-create maritime scenes.

One of the two central pools, which you can see from different levels, has two enormous and spectacular eastern-looking heads, apparently carved from rock. The setting was remarkable, but it deserved a better stock of marine life. We made the best of pointing out the few sharks to the children, but compared with shark displays they've seen in provincial towns, it was disappointing.

I suppose it was bad luck that the escalator wasn't moving (it stopped amid security calls for first-aid), but there must have been a better way of handling the problem than herding visitors up the immobilised escalator with instructions to "keep to the left because there's a piece of metal sticking out of the top". Perhaps more than one escalator might not be a bad idea for the expected thousands of visitors a day this summmer.

TIM BISHOP



The old County Hall, now home to the London Aquarium

Lots of the notices telling you which way to go, where the exit is, and exactly how to tickle a ray are just photocopied sheets. A rush job for the holidays. But far worse than that is the lack of really good information. Notices by the tanks are few, extremely brief, and far too high for all but the oldest children.

My five-year-old daughter and three-year-old son were fascinated by a fish with a long snout, but there was nothing to tell us what it was or anything about it. We watched some wrasse, and the five-year-old piped up: "Mummy, isn't that the one we've seen in the Sea Life Centre, that changes from being a man to a lady?" Very possibly, but there was nothing to tell us. The private lives of fish are very private indeed at the London Aquarium.

In a shallow-waters display, blennies swam among sea anemones, but there was nothing about the anemones at all. We were constantly lifting the children up to see above the crowds in front of each tank. There seemed to be remarkably few displays for such a large area. But there were two memorable tanks. The children loved the one filled with bright, fancy fish, and I stared for a while at the translucent and lovely moon jellyfish.

Our children have been entranced in various Sea Life Centres. They have stared for ages at the fish in the Tropical World in Roundhay Park in Leeds, which is free. A morning of seahorses, scary shark tunnels, octopuses, catfish and crabs is just up their street. But the London Aquarium — for all its space — is poor value. There are said to be 350 species here, but it doesn't feel like it.

The children felt they'd had a long dark walk with less than exciting fishy interludes and couldn't wait to get out for an ice-cream. It took us more than five minutes to squeeze through the gift shop, not including the time spent buying two fish balloons (£1.99 each) at the exit.

Next we spent £10.40 on a river trip between Westminster Bridge and Tower Bridge and the children had a good time waving their fish balloons about.

Back home, they told their grandparents they'd been on a train, in a taxi, on a boat and in a bus. And they never mentioned the capital's first and only major experience of underwater life.

● *For admission details, ring the London Aquarium on 0171-967 8000. Tickets £6.50, £4.50 for children aged three to 14, £20 for a family ticket.*

SIMON WALKER

Alan Stewart, the chief diver at the London Aquarium, in the "Pacific Tank", with its sharks, small fry and stone Easter Island figures

Cashing in on good sports

Now that taking a couple of sons to a football match requires a deep breath and a deep pocket, some fathers may be tempted to choose a museum instead. The Science Museum in South Kensington, London, where marketing now looms at least as large as scholarship, cannot be accused of neglecting the opportunity.

The museum has just opened an exhibition called the Science of Sport and, as Middlesbrough took on Leicester in the Coca-Cola Cup final last Sunday, the gallery was packed with would-be Ravanellis having a go. If some of their fathers were looking slightly shell-shocked, it may be because this money-saving trip hadn't worked out quite as they had hoped.

The Science of Sport isn't a museum gallery as you or I remember one. There's hardly an interesting object to be seen, old or new, save the beautiful Formula I McLaren-Mercedes driven, I think, by David Coulthard in last year's championship. Confirmation of this would have been a help, but last Sunday there wasn't a trace of information about the car, the driver, or how well it had performed.

The bulk of the gallery is taken up by try-it-yourself demonstrations of various sports. Remarkably, the youngsters formed orderly queues to do things you could do just as easily and with a lot more fun in a gym, or the back garden: kicking a football at a goal, throwing things about, hitting a few tennis balls. There is a rock wall to clamber across, with hand and foot holds and a soft landing to avoid injury, and a short section of running track where you can test your speed off the blocks. By far the most original display is virtual volleyball, where the ball is shown crossing a screen on which the participants can see themselves in silhouette as they jump for it. The feeblest is the simulated snowboard, where you simply balance on wobbling snowboards.

Children try out the sport simulators at the Science Museum in South Kensington

The science part of the exhibition includes a machine that analyses the nutritional value of a meal (sponsored by Shredded Wheat), a board with buttons and flashing lights to assess reaction times and rowing and pedalling machines with read-outs of speed and calories consumed. There is nothing on the aerodynamics of sport, though everybody would like to know how footballers "bend" a shot around the defensive wall, or golfers shape a hook around the trees.

The principal sponsor is Adidas, so sports shoes get a cabinet to themselves. Even this is a missed opportunity. Behind the display is a marvellous picture of Les Ferdinand in full cry but the sports shoes are not those of actual sportsmen, with the exception of Stan Smith's tennis shoes. Real boots, worn by real players to score goals, would have made this look less like a shoe shop.

I didn't sample the simulators which demonstrate the thrill of bobsleighs, Grand Prix cars, motorbikes, or skis. They look good, but they cost an extra £2, on top of the £5.95 for adults to get into the museum (£3.20 for children) and the £3 (children £2) to get into Science of Sport. And, in case the point isn't made clearly enough, the only way out of the exhibition is through a shop selling sports gear.

The exhibition is open for the next 18 months, and the museum hopes to pull in an extra 300,000 visitors over that period. Hugh Roderick, its head of marketing and communications, says: "We want people to come away with a better understanding of the important role that science plays in sport. We also want to attract young people who previously haven't considered visiting the Science Museum, and convince them that the museum has a lot to offer in terms of fun and learning."

A worthy ambition, and I hope it works. The children there last Sunday were having fun, even though the show is neither proper sport, nor solid science. It is best suited to under-tens. There are some lengthy queues, and it isn't an especially cheap day out.

● *Science Museum, Exhibition Road, London SW7 5BD (0171-938 8000). Science of Sport exhibition open 10am-4.30pm every day until September 1998.*

"What can I do with that old barn?"

See p. 26

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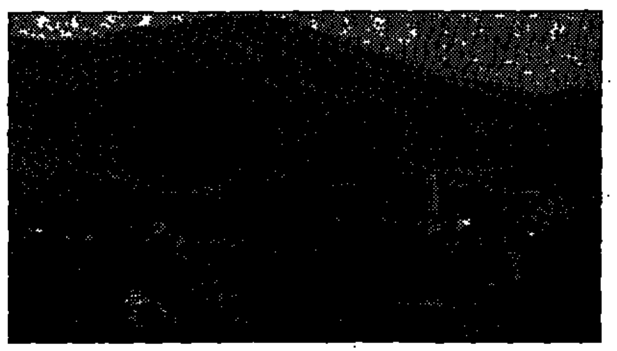

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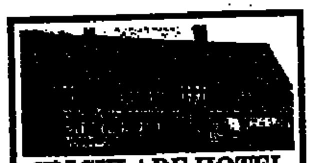

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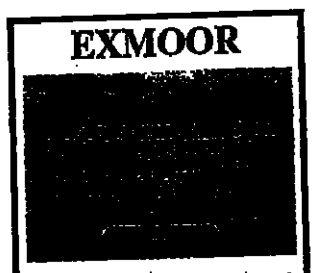

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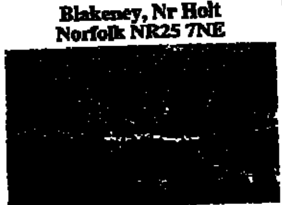

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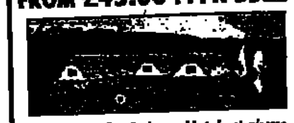

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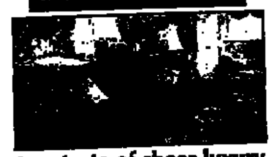

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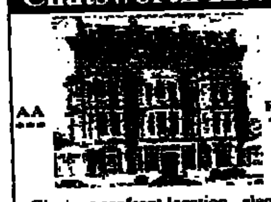

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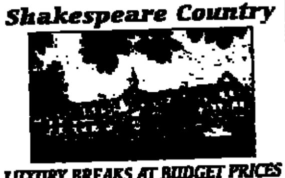

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CHESS

by Raymond Keene

THE chess world has been surprised recently by a spate of successes by young players. Regular readers of my daily column will have noticed there a win by nine-year-old Gawain Jones against the international master Malcolm Pein, chess correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*. Gawain achieved the distinction of becoming the youngest player ever to have taken a game in an official tournament off an international master.

Not to be outdone, the 14-year-old French boy Etienne Bacrot has achieved what many thought impossible, earning the title grandmaster at the age of 14 years and two months, breaking the records set by Bobby Fischer, Judit Polgar and Peter Leko.

White: Bacrot; Black: Anic
Enghien, March 1997
Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6
3 Nf3 d5 4 Nc3 Bb4
5 Bg5 Nbd7 6 e3 c5

One of Black's less solid defences to the Queen's Gambit. The idea is to obtain a menacing queenside pawn majority which could prove deadly against a white player who is not up with the theory or fails to react with sufficient vigour.

7 cxd5 exd5 8 Qc2 Qa5
9 Bd3 0-0 10 0-0 c4

Although this relieves the tension in the centre, Black now establishes his dangerous phalanx of queenside pawns. In the future an advance based on . . . b5-b4 may give Black an automatic strategic victory.

11 Bf5 Re8 12 Nd2 g6
13 Bxd7

It seems strange to give up the light squares in this fashion whilst also ceding Black the advantage of the bishop pair. 13 Bh3 is certainly possible, but White's choice has the advantage of retarding Black's development, since he must now recapture with the knight.

13 . . . **Nxd7 14 Rae1**. White is clearly massing for a counter-break in the centre.

14 . . . **Bxc3**. In his turn, Black gives up a bishop, but hopes to create a weakness on c3.

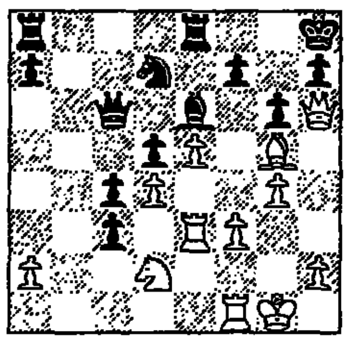
15 bxc3 Nb6 16 f3. White is ready with his strategy, a central advance based on e4. Black, though, now misses the point of his own operations. In striving for an exchange of queens, which White can easily evade, Black renounces the main theme of his defence, which consists of counter-attack against the white pawn on c3. Hence, 16 . . . Bd7 followed by . . . Na4 is the correct plan

16 . . . Qa4 17 Qb2 Qc6
18 e4 Be6 19 Re3 Na4
20 Qc1 b5 21 Qe1 Nb6
22 Qh4

White's pieces gather menacingly around the black king.

22 . . . Nd7 23 g4 b4
24 e5 bxc3 25 Qh6.

Threatening 26 Bf6 with a forced mate. **25 . . . Kh8.**



26 Ne4. A brilliant reinforcement of his attack. If now 26 . . . dxe4 27 fxe4, White, thanks to his ingenious 23rd move, has gained the threat of Rh3. Thereafter, the attempt to defend by 27 . . . Rg8 fails to 28 Qxh7+ Kxh7 29 Rh3+ Kg7 30 Bh6+ Kh7 31 Bf8 checkmate, a variation worthy of the young Kasparov.

26 . . . f5 27 exf6 Rg8
28 Nxc3 Raf8

The only way to disturb White's attack was 28 . . . Qb6, with the threat to capture on d4. Even then, after the simple 29 Kh1, to be followed by Rfe1, it is difficult to believe that Black could survive. **29 Qh4 Qb6.** Too late, since White can now finish with a flourish. **30 Rxe6 Qxe6 31 Re1 Rxf6.** If he moves the queen, 32 Re7 is crushing.

32 Rxe6 Rxe6 33 Nxd5 Rb8
34 Bf4

Black resigns.

WINNING MOVE

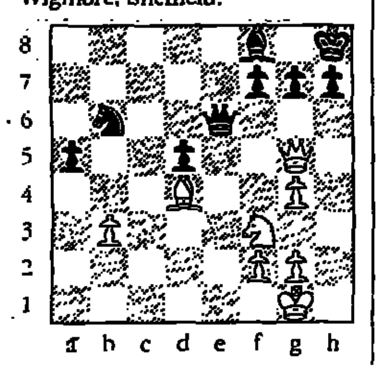
By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Tischbierek - Degelmann, Bad Worishofen 1997. White has pressure against the g7-square and the black back rank is also vulnerable. How did White combine these factors to force a quick win?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Qxh7+

Last week's winner: R C Wigmore, Sheffield.



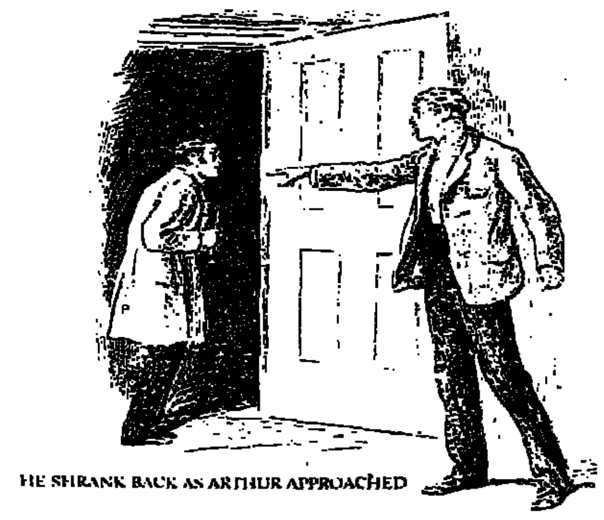
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

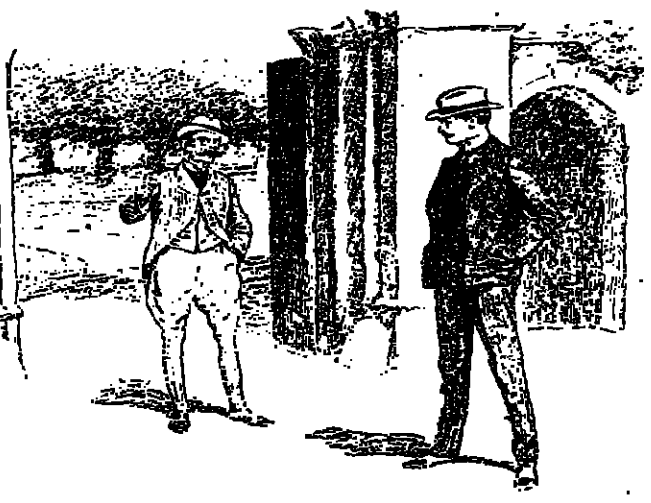
The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption 47, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, April 16.



HE SHRANK BACK AS ARTHUR APPROACHED



"Would you direct me to the Cellulite Clinic kind Sir?"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) *was submitted by Lynne Smith of Mark, Somerset*

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

LAMA
a. A spelling game
b. Gold cloth
c. A Los Angeles graduate

MOORSTONE
a. *Granite*
b. A bollard
c. Greeny-grey

LICKPENNY
a. Miserly
b. A liquorish stick
c. Profligate

MAULSTICK
a. An artist's prop
b. A picador's lance
c. A perennial flower

Answers on page 22

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

A "PSYCHIC" bid is a bluff bid designed to interfere with the opponents' bidding or play. The Laws of bridge make it clear that it is a legitimate ruse. But if a player assumes, with no direct evidence, that his partner has psyched, in some circumstances a tournament director may rule against his side.

However, if a player can deduce from the bidding that his partner has psyched, it is perfectly in order for him to use the information. The Welsh player sitting South should have made such a deduction on this hand, from the 1997 Macallan Camrose Trophy match between Wales and Scotland.

Dealer South Game all IMPs

North:
♠2
♥QJ6
♦107652
♣8642

West:
♠AK93
♥K752
♦J94
♣AQ

East:
♠J10876
♥A1093
♦-
♣10953

South:
♠Q54
♥84
♦AKQ83
♣KJ7

S	W	N	E
1 D	Dble	Redble (1)	1 S
1NT	2 S	Pass (2)	3 H
Dble (3)	3 S	Pass	Pass
Dble (4)	Pass	4 D(5)	Pass
5 D(6)	Dble	All Pass	

Contract: Five Diamonds doubled, by South. Lead: the ace of spades

(1) The psyche — with a convenient escape route into diamonds, this was a reasonable moment for North to try mixing it up. The standard meaning of Redouble is that North has a good, defensively-oriented hand, with at least nine points. With a genuine shapely raise to Three Diamonds North would bid 2NT. An immediate raise to Three Diamonds would be pre-emptive, a possible bid on this hand.

(2) Still consistent with having a genuine redouble, awaiting developments, but denying good diamond support — with that he would bid Three Diamonds now.

(3) This can't be right. A double after bidding no-trumps should be for penalties, particularly opposite a partner who has said he was willing to punish the opponents.

(4) Presumably for penalties, but by now South probably had enough evidence to pass.

(5) This announced to the whole table, and most of the kibitzers, that North's Redouble was not kosher. With diamond support and a good hand North would have entered the auction earlier — see (2).

(6) Obtusely maintaining his unshakeable trust in his partner. If South had passed, North-South at worst would have achieved the par result — East-West bidding and making Four Spades, as happened at the other table. And if West had passed Four Diamonds, or doubled, North-South would have gained on the board. Five Diamonds Doubled went three off for 800 to East-West.

● The first Mind Sports Olympiad will be held at the Royal Festival Hall, London from August 18 to 24, 1997. There are over 30 different events, including bridge, gin rummy, backgammon, three types of chess, Go and Scrabble.

All inquiries should be directed to David Levy, 0171-485 9146.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

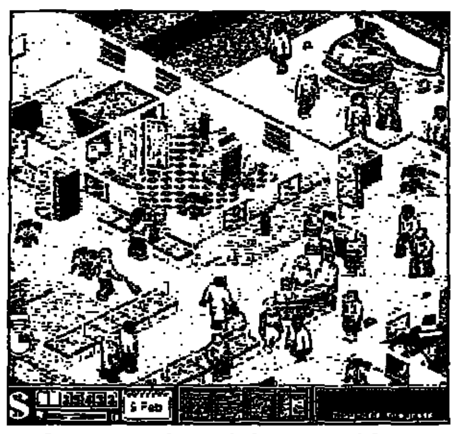
by Tim Wapshott

I HAVE been in hospital for the last week and I'm exhausted. While I was there I rubbed shoulders with those suffering Bloaty Head, Slack Tongue, Broken Wind, 3rd Degree Sideburns and The Squits. Not all were lucky, the Grim Reaper claimed his fair share.

Bullfrog's **Theme Hospital** is a real tonic. The grown-up brother of the company's **Theme Park**, now it's time to play hospital administrator and design, build and oversee smooth operations of all things medicinal in the hospitals of your dreams. Basic constructions include receptions, GP consulting rooms and pharmacies manned variously by receptionists, nurses, house doctors and consultants.

Like all god games, the key is in the planning and with each new canvas you find yourself trying new layouts to maximise the efficiency of your resources while keeping overheads low. Money is the life blood of any administrative reign, and it has a habit of drying up when you least expect it. As well as treatments and cures, patients will walk out prematurely if you can't keep them warm or, to quench their thirst, place them within arm's reach of drinks machines. Doctors and consultants have a broad knowledge of medicine but some are qualified in psychiatry, surgery or research and can thus deal with unusual complaints. Your specialists can teach lesser doctors in training rooms. Keeping all parties content is a real balancing act.

Underpay or overwork staff and they will walk out. Slack up their workload too much, though, and they'll spend more time strolling to and from their common rooms than working. Hardest to placate are the handymen, who water plants, maintain machinery and mop-up vomit. The game engine also regurgitates when the overall balance of your operation is clumsy, sending penalty earthquakes which can damage or destroy your expensive machinery. If equipment is wiped out, the room falls into disrepair and cannot be used again. In addition to daily patient quotas, emergency cases turn up on your doorstep two ways — either with sick people flown in to the hospital helipad or as illness outbreaks which can turn into epidemics.



Play hospital administrator with the excellent game Theme Hospital

Failure to contain an epidemic results in severe fines imposed by the Ministry of Health. The game progresses through a series of increasingly demanding scenarios, presented in a predetermined order so you never know what you have to do next until you get there. More complex breakthroughs only come to light in later campaigns. The sound of tills is never far away, nor are the cheers and jeers of your patients relaying their gut feelings to you. When patients die their souls float upwards to celestial strains.

Most stimulating is the constant Tannoy babble of the receptionist, beckoning nurses and doctors to different treatment rooms or reminding patients to have their cheque books handy. Her delivery hits just the right note of irritation, trotted off in perfect "Thank you for telephoning Holiday Inns, my name is Debbie, how may I help you?" style. Her voice even rises at the end of some sentences, unnecessarily turning bland statements into questions.

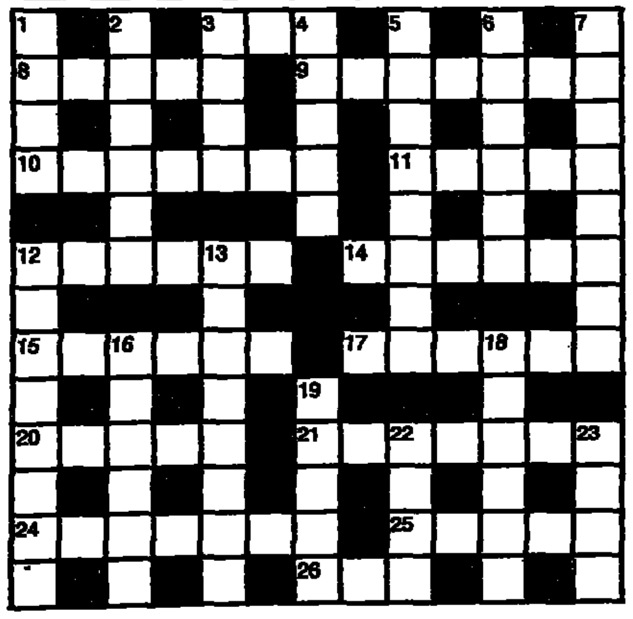
All that is known of the person behind the voice is that she was an out-of-work actress girlfriend of one of the development team. I hope she was paid well for her efforts since she is responsible for a good 20 per cent of Theme Hospital's enduring appeal. This is a game which will take the best part of a month to complete, only then might you get sick of it. The screen is rich in detail with bustling citizens but an option to pull back and view the entire hospital is missing. Also, beware the game's load and save options which are fiddly and ambiguous — it's easy to load an old game by mistake as you try to save, but instead lose, a current game.

After the first marathon session it will dawn on you that you have played this game before. In some respects, though much more refined, it's a carbon copy of **Theme Park**. Where you once built rides to entertain punters and employed handymen to maintain them and clean up litter and vomit, you now build treatment rooms and again employ handymen for menial maintenance and cleaning.

Theme Hospital is also like many other games, from Civilisation to SimTower and Command & Conquer. With a different packaging you are still effectively training up and dispatching troops while ongoing research gives you bigger and better toys to help. Still, the hospital subject matter remains a good wheeze.

This week's Top Tip, winning him a Microsoft title, comes from Alex Bowler of Chesterfield: "To prevent eye strain from hours of playing Solitaire, turn the monitor around and get a friend to describe the screen to you."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1066

ACROSS
3 Club; protected mammal (3)
8 Road to house; compel (5)
9 One without illusions (7)
10 One without credulity (7)
11 Wood-shaping machine (5)
12 Grass-cutter (6)
14 Breathe painfully; bright idea (6)
15 Esoteric (6)
17 Rival of classical Athens (6)
20 Manfred, Don Juan poet (5)
21 Contented (7)
24 Spouse's child, not one's own (7)
25 Calls; feature of Saturn (5)
26 Element Sn (3)

DOWN
1 Probability (4)
2 Best clothes (6)
3 Disposition; warped (4)
4 Stretch of land (5)
5 High-masted vessel (4,4)
6 Not much (6)
7 And so on (2,6)
12 Looking down on 'inferiors' (8)
13 Sanctity (8)
16 Membrane over eye (6)
18 Getting up; revolt (6)
19 Exhausted (5)
22 Make (money) (4)
23 Sleep rough (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1065

ACROSS: 1 Avid 3 Farcical 9 Cacti 10 Trawler 11 Ammeter 12 Tool 14 Stupid 16 Allure 18 List 19 Unheard 22 Anagram 23 Haiti 24 Gloaming 25 Smug

DOWN: 1 Archaism 2 Incommunicado 4 Artery 5 Chattel 6 Colloquialism 7 Lore 8 Silt 13 Peddling 15 Interim 17 Gunman 20 Ha-ha 21 Gang

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THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

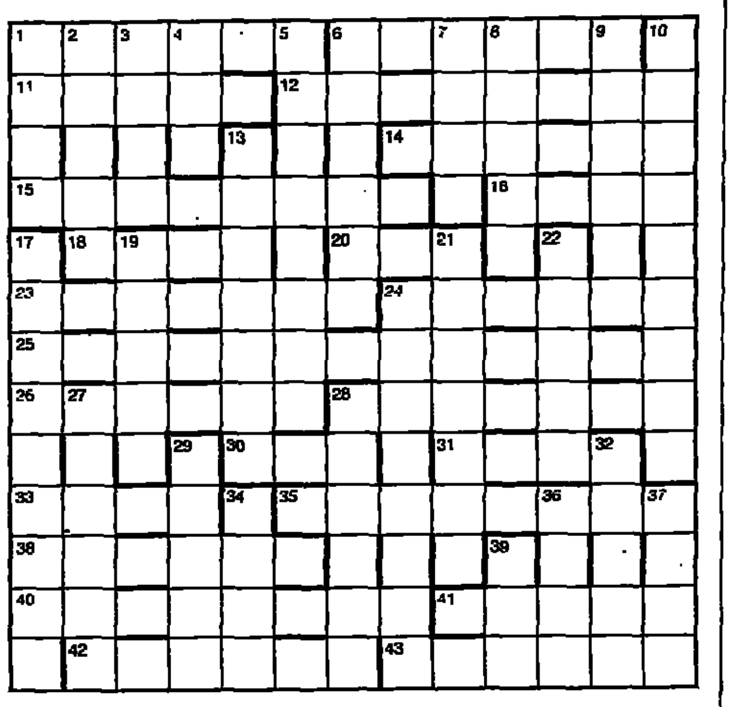
No 3405: 25 Across by Psyche

FOURTEEN clues have a superfluous letter in the definition part; in all the remaining clues, subsidiary parts indicate the answer with a superfluous letter added somewhere along its length. In clue order, these superfluous letters spell out an appropriate nine word extract from Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. The solutions to nine clues have been altered thematically before entry in the grid. 6 down is thematic and unclued. One place name is not in Chambers.

ACROSS
1 He sculpted Eros's head abut three times for old coin (6)
6 Take on South Coast river Odyssey, perhaps (6)
11 Greek-eight find broken oar in vessel (5)
12 Lump of metal Athene's converted into ethereal iron seat (8)
14 Chariot entering race is driven off (6)
15 Greek sculptor embodied Aeolus (lovelessly) with wadd (8)
16 Initially Sophocles had "God" in title (4)
20 Greave worn by victorious Adonis (3)
23 Abnormal growth and so on, Pluto's heart not in perfect place (7)
24 Achilles cutting across Square in France to get paste (6)
26 Jibs, amidships in three biremes, daily carry tons on board (6)
28 More pungent seaweed upset Irene (not a lot) (7)
30 Once Zeus reflected, oddly tender (3)
31 In low pressure, ends of Delphi candles gutter badly (4)
33 Bring back Goddess of Greek food (4)
35 50 per cent of horsemen went astray in the middle of Philadelphia (8)
38 Golden poet's idle composition of "Pleiades" lacking power and depth (6)
40 Theo's upset; one third of ecclesiasticism is a tendency to moralise (8)
41 Crane's flapping, catching hint of Boreas springing up (5)
42 Nemesis can strike (some) Mediterranean islanders (6)
43 Leaving the head, Tethys consumes left parts of wether (6)

DOWN
1 River on rocky Ida has lots of energy (4)
2 Chloris' heat caught by a Tiberian writer (5)
3 Half-heartedly Hermes aneles bird living by shea (4)
4 Bits of Galatea (3)
5 Curtains round broken idol make people stare perhaps (8)
7 Homer on stern of black bark seen on shore (4)
8 Indifferent Bellerophon's first failure (5)
9 Finial over half of Eros not everlasting (6)
10 Linens I favour edged with borders of Peloponnese damasks (9)
13 Sentences constructed from Socrates' (so overlooked) introductions to 'The Persians' (7)
17 Bent back support of Laertes initially in pranks (9)
19 First of Argo's oarsmen tilt position of anchor (5)
21 With a leap Adonis twisted round large kind of bar (7, two words)
22 Hebe's third lot is a place in France (5)
24 Parish perhaps, previously well-known (8)
27 Student passes divorcees embracing mischievous goddess (6)
28 Burns small island annihilating head of Laertes (6)
29 It's simpler: let soul override heart in Terpsichore (5)
32 Being weaker, Hera trips with empty pail (5)
34 Slip's indicated so Hecate abandons the deranged, heartless Moirai! (4)
36 Bloat out through filling up with Ulysses' original recipe (4)
37 Delos' first song society is just good enough (4)
39 Show disgusting! Principal characters in "Pygmalion" are hopeless! (3)

Statistics relating to 1996 crosswrods, including personal record, are now available to senders of an SAE (from overseas stamp exempt), at least 8½ x 4¼ in (220x110mm), to J.E.Green, c/o 63, Green Lane, St Albans, Herts AL3 6HE. It would be helpful if applications could be kept separate from current puzzle submissions.



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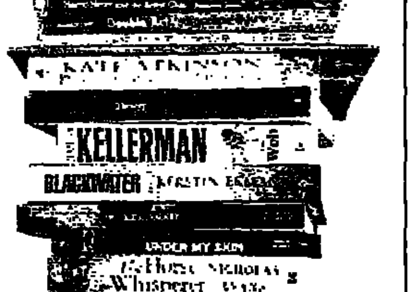

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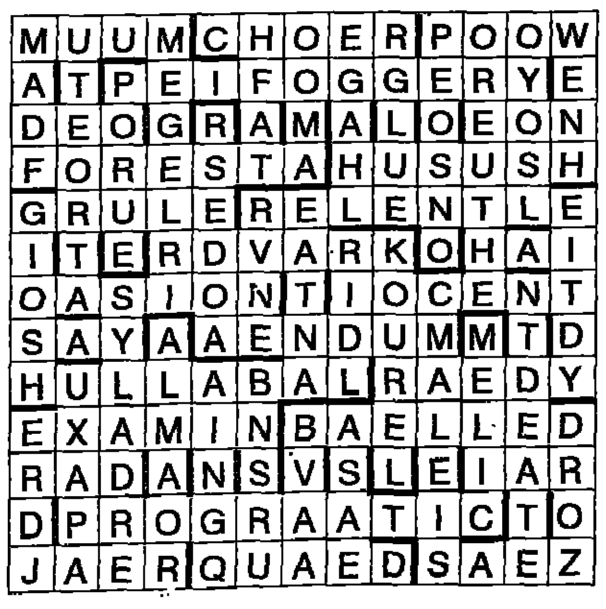

M	U	U	M	C	H	O	E	R	P	O	O	W
A	T	P	E	I	F	O	G	G	E	R	Y	E
D	E	O	G	R	A	M	A	L	O	E	O	N
F	O	R	E	S	T	A	H	U	S	U	S	H
G	R	U	L	E	R	E	L	E	N	T	L	E
I	T	E	R	D	V	A	R	K	O	H	A	I
O	A	S	I	O	N	T	I	O	C	E	N	T
S	A	Y	A	A	E	N	D	U	M	M	T	D
H	U	L	L	A	B	A	L	R	A	E	D	Y
E	X	A	M	I	N	B	A	E	L	L	E	D
R	A	D	A	N	S	V	S	L	E	I	A	R
D	P	R	O	G	R	A	A	T	I	C	T	O
J	A	E	R	Q	U	A	E	D	S	A	E	Z

Solution to No 3402:
Minus Two Plus One by Gioconda

Down

1	*Dam + F*	22	Deity
2	Outrate	24	Lid + R
3	Leiger + M	25	Loure + K
5	Fah + T	28	Layers + D
6	Moa + O	30	Camels + I
7	Gale + H	31	Dentate
8	Rule + G	33	Aroma + L
9	Nouse + P	35	Lime + C
10	Outher + E	37	Paua + X
11	Loos + Y	38	Gain + Q
12	Hen + W	39	Burs + N
13	Rope + U	41	Red + J
15	Adore + S	42	Ava + B
19	Shogi	43	Sea + A
20	Ren + V	44	Rod + Z
21	Antae		

The winner is A. Kiggell, Ashampstead Common, Berkshire.

The five runners-up are C. Ellis, Bristol: R. Furman, Windsor, Berkshire: R. Tiedeman, Hazlebury Bryan, Dorset: N. Coleman, Penryn, Cornwall: A. Parkinson, Halifax, West Yorkshire.

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LADIES

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GOOD Looking kind man, graduate professional, 42, contentedly married for 12 yrs, now seeks a new partner. I am outgoing, intelligent, fit and enjoy sports, travel and a country lifestyle. I am happily encumbered with a young daughter. Witm a Lady in her early to mid 30's, who is attractive, friendly and sincere for a future together. Photo please. Wilts/Hants. Please Reply to Box No 4309 ☎ ✍

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

THE TIMES
cannot guarantee that respondents will receive a reply when answering advertisements on this page, although we hope that as a matter of courtesy they will. When making contact with people for the first time it is advisable to meet at a public place and let a member of your family or a trusted friend know where you will be. We would advise readers and advertisers to exercise caution when giving out personal details. This will be respected by genuine respondents.

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LOVING, adventurous, affectionate, Surrey based professional man, 29 seeks similar lady with GSOH. Photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 4142 ✍

MANAGING Director, 6ft 2in, 51, dark haired & slim, seeks his someone special. I am divorced, no children, hard working & successful. I enjoy dining out, wine, travel, weekends away and, hopefully, your company. If you are 27-45, fun to be with, interesting, attractive & sensual, I would love to hear from you. Chelsea. Photo please. Please Reply to Box No 4287 ✍

MAYDAY Attractive blond doctor needs attractive female 25-35 to crew yachts in Solent and Spain, to share life London/ Spain/ Thailand & a genuine, sensitive, faithful loving relationship. Photo plse. Box 4146 ☎ ✍

MERCHANT NAVY Chief Officer, 53, divorced, presently homeless, excellent home decorator & DIY man seeks refined lady for relationship. Photo appreciated. ALA. Box No 4160 ✍

NORMAL bloke domesticated with a sense of adventure. Cares & shares, fit & slim, late forties. Likes people, fun & outdoors. Photo. Edge of N. London. Please Reply to Box No 4290 ✍

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PLEASANT, kind, unpretentious man, 41, 5'11", slim & fit, with own hair, teeth & company. WLTM slim, N/S woman, 30+ who likes to smile. London/ Home Counties. Photo please. Reply to Box No 4234 ✍

PROFESSIONAL man, 35, single, solvent; likes sport, art & travel. Seeks like minded woman 27-35. Letter + photo. London. Reply to Box No 4288 ☎ ✍

PROFESSIONAL, single, n/s (52) WLTM elegant, English Rose (35-45) whose interests include fine Arts, music, health. London/ Home Counties. Box No 4268 ✍

RECENTLY separated Mayfair businessman, N/S WLTM an attractive lady in her early 40's, N/S. Please Reply with recent photograph & tel. number to Box No 4267 ✍

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

SEPARATED professional good looking male 37 currently based in Bahamas (Interest travel, triathlon, golf, tennis, diving etc). Seeks slim, attractive female (non smoker, no children), age 28-35 to help him enjoy life in the sunshine. Please write enclosing recent photo(s) to Box No 4328 ✍

SOMEWHERE, hopefully, there is a delightful, good looking, vivacious, N/S, romantic lady with a lovely smile & manner who is active & enjoys life to the full with GSOH. A little sophistication touched with elegance & style with the right chemistry will bring back that real sparkle & a new meaning into a lasting relationship full of affection & TLC. Enjoying each other's company from pillow talk to drying dishes or walking in the Lake District or walking in Sainsburys. It's the sharing that makes it all worthwhile whilst encompassing romance, music, theatre, dancing, countryside, walking, travel, the home & much more. This retired Cheshire widower, very young looking (looks fiftyish) & active in his middle sixties, slim(ish), 5'8" with a good life style would appreciate a genuine reply with a recent photo from that lovely lady allowing the sun to rise once again. Please Reply to Box No 4337 ✍

SPANISH, affectionate, sincere, honest, caring man, fit (52) & very lonely. I enjoy theatre, antiques, sports. My heart is full of love for a genuine long term relationships. Please write, you will not regret it. South Coast. Box No 4323 ☎ ✍

SUSSEX man, 42, 6'1", professional, slim, energetic, sporty (enjoys golf & squash) looking for intelligent, attractive, slender lady, 30-45. Reply with photo to Box No 4263 ✍

SWEDISH MALE 30 yrs, Blonde. Blue eyed, fun loving, wants female crew mate to sail to Caribbean Islands from June onwards. Send letter & photo to Ingvar Andersson, Muraregatan 13a, 43166, Mölndal, Sweden. Tel: 00 46705141515.

TALL, dark, handsome, & incredibly solvent, GSOH, 30 year old managing director (London based) seeks fun loving partner for romance. Interests include: exotic holidays, theatre, sailing & country walks. Photo please to Box No 4281 ✍

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TIMES CLASSIFIED

How the Big Cat got its claws into quality
Page 2

CAR 97

The best ways to take your bicycle by car
Page 5

SATURDAY APRIL 12 1997

Boxing promoter Frank Warren has a new heavyweight. **Helen Mound** reports

DES JENSON

Frank Warren and his Hummer: "I was hitting the door mirrors on every parked car I passed and leaving a trail of broken glass behind me"

The American champ Don King gave away

Introducing Frank Warren's latest recruit, Hummer, 6ft tall, 7ft wide and weighing in at three-and-a-half tonnes. A heavyweight the like of which Britain has never seen. The boxing promoter is used to keeping company with large, powerful characters such as Frank Bruno or Mike Tyson, but despite the name and impressive credentials, Hummer is a new addition to Warren's garage, not his team of professional boxers.

Designed as an "unstoppable military vehicle" for the American army, it's taken a while for Warren to learn how to handle the Hummer on British roads. He thought he'd discovered a technical problem the first time he drove it in London. "I said to my passengers 'What's that clicking noise?' and they fell about because I was hitting the door mirrors on every parked car I passed and leaving a trail of broken glass behind me."

Not that Warren is unused to big cars — he's come a long way since he bought a Mini as his first — but the luxury military vehicle must look at odds alongside his Bentley, Aston Martin and Austin Healey.

Don King, the extraordinary-haired US boxing promoter, noticed the trend for military. vehicles among the rich and famous last year and decided to indulge himself. Dining in New York with Warren, the subject of Hummers came up.

"I'm ordering five," declared King.

"What's a Hummer?" asked Warren.

"It's a giant four-wheel drive. You should have one, you'll love it," replied King. And before Warren could say "High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle" (its full military name), King had made a call on his mobile phone to the local dealer and a sixth $75,000 (£46,800) Hummer was ordered.

"I had no idea what it was until it arrived in the UK four months ago," laughs Warren, clearly delighted with his present from King. He's had the seats trimmed with cream leather (the Americans have a nasty fashion for crushed velour), fitted it with a powerful stereo and a new security system and ordered chrome wheels and an additional seat. He'd like a sunroof, but cutting into the bullet-proof bodywork would be a tough job.

The Hummer is technically the same as those used in war zones: permanent four-wheel drive, self-inflating and deflating tyres, bulletproof bodywork and glass and bombproof underbody. And yes, Warren does wish he'd had one five years ago in Barking when he was shot and spent weeks in intensive care.

The total cost of Warren's Hummer is probably close to £100,000 including the type-approval changes (new lights and indicators), import duties and shipping expenses and the optional extras fitted in the UK. But that's nothing compared with what the annual fuel bills will be. Warren drives this 5.7-litre V8 petrol model every day; it can cruise at up to 90mph, but at best it can achieve only 12mpg; use a lot of throttle and it drops to 7mpg. Filling the 23-gallon tank and 17-gallon reserve costs around £120.

'The kids love it, but my wife doesn't like it being parked in the drive'

Finding someone to service the Hummer is going to be a challenge for Warren, although there are US army bases in East Anglia that work on the military versions. But a local agricultural engineering firm that normally services tractors has carried out the first oil change.

It comes as no surprise to learn that it's power that delights Britain's leading boxing promoter. "Big engines, love 'em," he grins broadly when he talks about the Hummer's performance. Shifting to 30mph in five seconds feels knockout, although getting to 60mph in nearly 20 seconds is a little lethargic. But, despite its size and wide track, it has a tight turning circle and is surprisingly nimble thanks in part to its very low centre of gravity. The only drawback is the hyper-light power steering that provides absolutely no feel. But it's not a problem, as the likelihood of any driver chucking three-and-a-half tonnes of armour-plated titanium through winding roads is pretty slim.

The American army carries out Arctic and desert operations in raucous 6.5-litre turbodiesel Hummers that sound like something out of *Mad Max*. The civilian petrol version has a more familiar V8 growl that announces Warren's arrival as effectively as a team of Rottweilers snapping at your ankles.

Residents of Hertford, where Warren has his offices, have begun to get used to the daily appearance of this monster, but every so often he notices with satisfaction the dropped jaws and amazed stares. "People definitely keep out of its way," he says proudly.

The Warren family currently enjoy total exclusivity in owning the only luxury civilian Hummer in Britain, but that isn't likely to last for long. "[Prince] Naseem has been on at me to help get him one, and I know Eubank is also keen," admits Warren. Chris Eubank is likely to take delivery of a new Hummer any day — he was recently spotted buying one in Dubai by an ITV film crew.

Despite the exclusivity, Susan Warren isn't as keen on the Hummer as her husband. "The kids love it, but my wife hates it. She doesn't like it being parked in the drive."

But as the new owner of Hunsdon Hall in Hertfordshire, what better way for him to tour his estate than in a big black shiny Hummer?

A MILITARY HISTORY

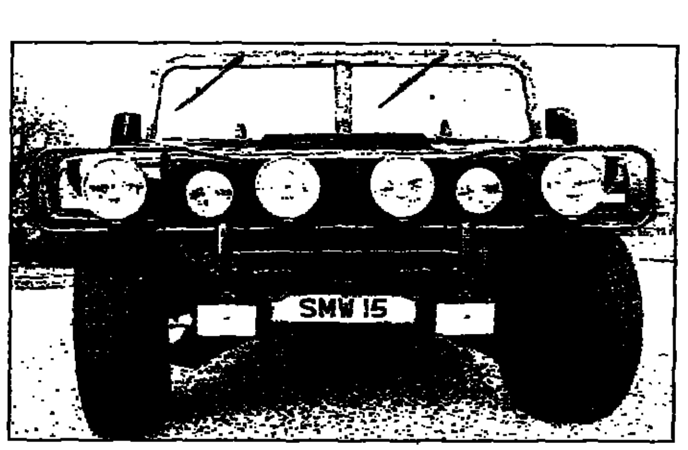
Film star from the battlefield

■ THE HISTORY of the Hummer began in 1979 when the American army put a contract out to develop a "High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle". After five months of testing, the AM General HMMWV (also known as Hummvee) was judged the superior machine and 55,000 were ordered. Although power isn't a major feature in the Hummers — 190bhp from the 6.5-litre turbodiesel and 5.7-litre petrol — massive torque makes them impressive. The petrol stamps out 300 lb ft at 2,400 revs, the turbodiesel an extraordinary 430 lb ft at just 1,700 revs.

■ DURING the Gulf war, the Hummvee gained fame for its strength and durability. However, several commanding officers were reported as favouring the luxurious Range Rovers, which is possibly why the armour-plated civilian Hummer was launched in 1991, with electric windows, air-conditioning and CD players.

■ THERE are six civilian models — two-door, four-door and soft-top versions, petrol or turbodiesel — sold through 50 dealers in America and 20 overseas distributors. It was an instant hit with US trendsetters and Hollywood boosted its image in movies such as *Last Action Hero*, *Broken Arrow* and, more recently, *The Fan* and *Dante's Peak*. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Mike Tyson were among the first customers.

Hummvees on the road to Kuwait City during the Gulf war



Making things hum: the bulletproof, bomb-proof giant

HUMMER

Engine: Hummer 5.7-litre V8; 190 bhp; 300 lb ft at 2400rpm. (Range Rover 4.6-litre V8; 225 bhp; 277 lb ft at 3000rpm).

Performance: 0-30mph 5.4 seconds; 0-60mph 19.6 seconds (10.1 seconds). Top speed, 93mph (118mph).

Economy: Seven to 12 miles per gallon (12-20mpg).

Dimensions: Height 75ins (72ins); width 106.5in (86ins) length 184.5ins (184ins); weight 3.5 tonnes (2.2 tonnes); ground clearance 16ins (14ins.)

Price: £31,250-£56,250 (£47,765).

THE **GOOD**, THE **BAD** AND THE DOWNRIGHT **UNPLEASANT**
They're all in the **J.D. Power** report on **car** satisfaction in this month's **Top Gear** magazine
Top Gear JD POWER SURVEY 1997 RESULTS

'Slippery when wet' — I offer thanks to the scientists who have worked that out, but I think there's a case for the more upbeat 'Not slippery when dry'

Dubious signs of intelligent life

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

Peter Barnard

You will not spend many hours on the roads of America before highways start to resemble giant exhibitions staged by advertising companies. Indeed the surest way to recognise that a town is looming is to measure the gaps between hoardings: the closer together, the nearer the town.

In Britain this kind of thing is frowned upon, and planning regulations are fairly strict. But in recent years there has been a trend towards unofficial signs, placed at the side of the road by individuals announcing everything from "Good Food 200 yards" to "Happy 40th Ron". At worst, this is irritating and tacky, but does not seriously impinge on the landscape. But, contrary to the bold words of politicians who extol personal responsibility, Britain remains a nanny state in which increasing numbers of official signs clutter the roadside.

They are often mutually exclusive in terms of road safety. On the one hand they try to warn us of hazards, yet on the other the sheer number become a hazard in themselves. But some safety signs are of dubious value and constitute an insult to the intelligence.

Last week on an A road in Somerset I passed a sign that said "Hidden dips for two miles", followed later by the inevitable "End of hidden dips". The dips did not seem hidden to me, but I suppose it could be argued that an overtaking manoeuvre might suddenly be compromised by an oncoming vehicle appearing out of a dip. Pretty marginal, though.

My favourite safety sign consists of three words: "Slippery when wet". Each time I offer a word of thanks to the scientists who have worked out that surfaces become slippery when they are wet, although I do think there is a case for the more positive and upbeat: "Not slippery when dry".

Have you noticed the sign for elderly people? It consists of a black outline showing two bent over human figures, one of whom is using a walking stick. I think it unlikely that anyone could conclude there must be a water diviner ahead; it obviously concerns aged folk. But it still bears the words "Elderly people" below the symbol just in case.

Such signs assume no ability to think on the part of drivers and take safety measures to absurd lengths. But there is another cluster which actually work against road safety: the signs directing us to places of interest, such as National Trust properties.

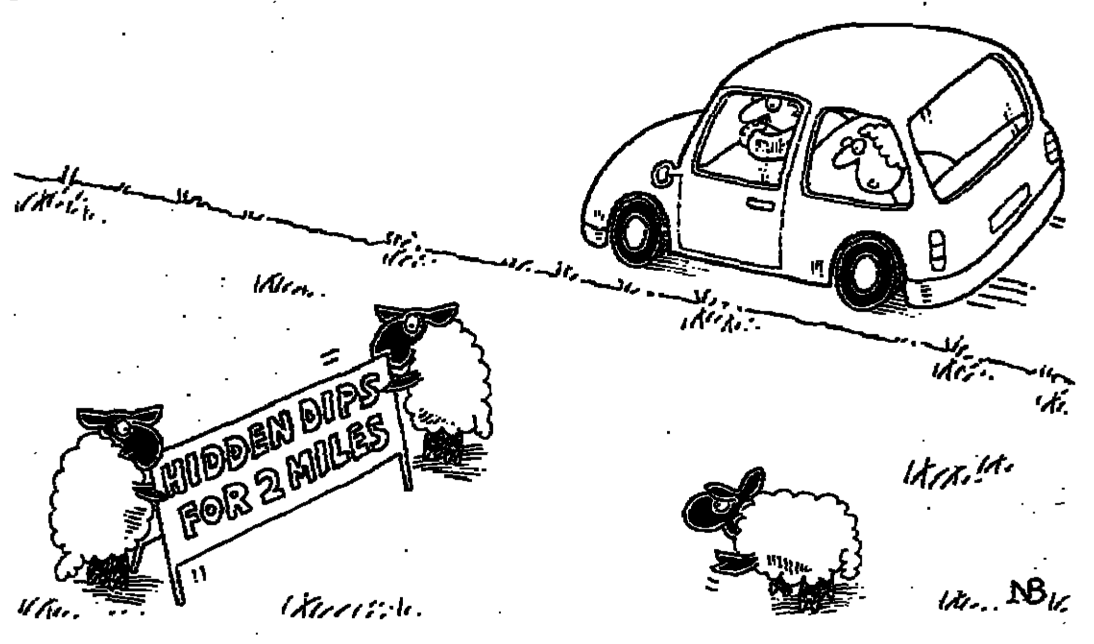
Some are useful. They work best if each sign contains one place of interest and, because the background is brown, they cannot be confused with road directions. However, there are now quite busy road junctions in some places where a single, huge brown sign contains information about four or five venues. This is too much.

I may want to know the way to the Victorian Steam Kettle Museum, the 18th-century Belt-Driven Tractor Exhibition, the Home for Distressed Barn Owls or the Charles Dickens Working Chimney Sweep Expo, but I do not think I want all this information at a roundabout which also contains road signs to eight places at every point of the compass.

Roundabouts are inherently dangerous because attitudes to them vary. Some drivers have either never heard of the rule about giving way to traffic on one's right or simply ignore it, therefore there is a good chance of hitting someone. Magistrates are not famously lenient if you claim to have been absorbed in deciding whether the Jacobean Leather Truss Museum required the second or third exit.

The problem is likely to get worse before it gets better. Heritage is big business and competition in the industry is intense. But so is competition among supermarkets, and if we allow this signing on a basis of need, Sainsbury and Tesco will demand equal treatment.

There is a simple solution. Tourist maps contain places of interest, so half the brown signs along our roads could be torn down, thus encouraging people to re-acquire the art of map reading.



Danger peer ahead

Eve-Ann Prentice

on the car story

■ THE Marquess of Queensberry carried a loaded revolver ready to shoot at them. Rudyard Kipling thought they were "civilising agents", and Victoria was not amused by the "horrible machines". They were talking at the turn of the century about the motor car.

Now, love it or loath it, few could argue that the car has become the icon of this century. More than 70 per cent of adults have come to rely on the internal combustion engine, according to an RAC survey released yesterday.

■ CARS and their drivers have been vilified from the word go, with pioneers in the 1890s branded "Carbarians", Trafalgar Square billboards denouncing motor travel, and cars described as "evil smelling" and "petrol-piddling monsters".

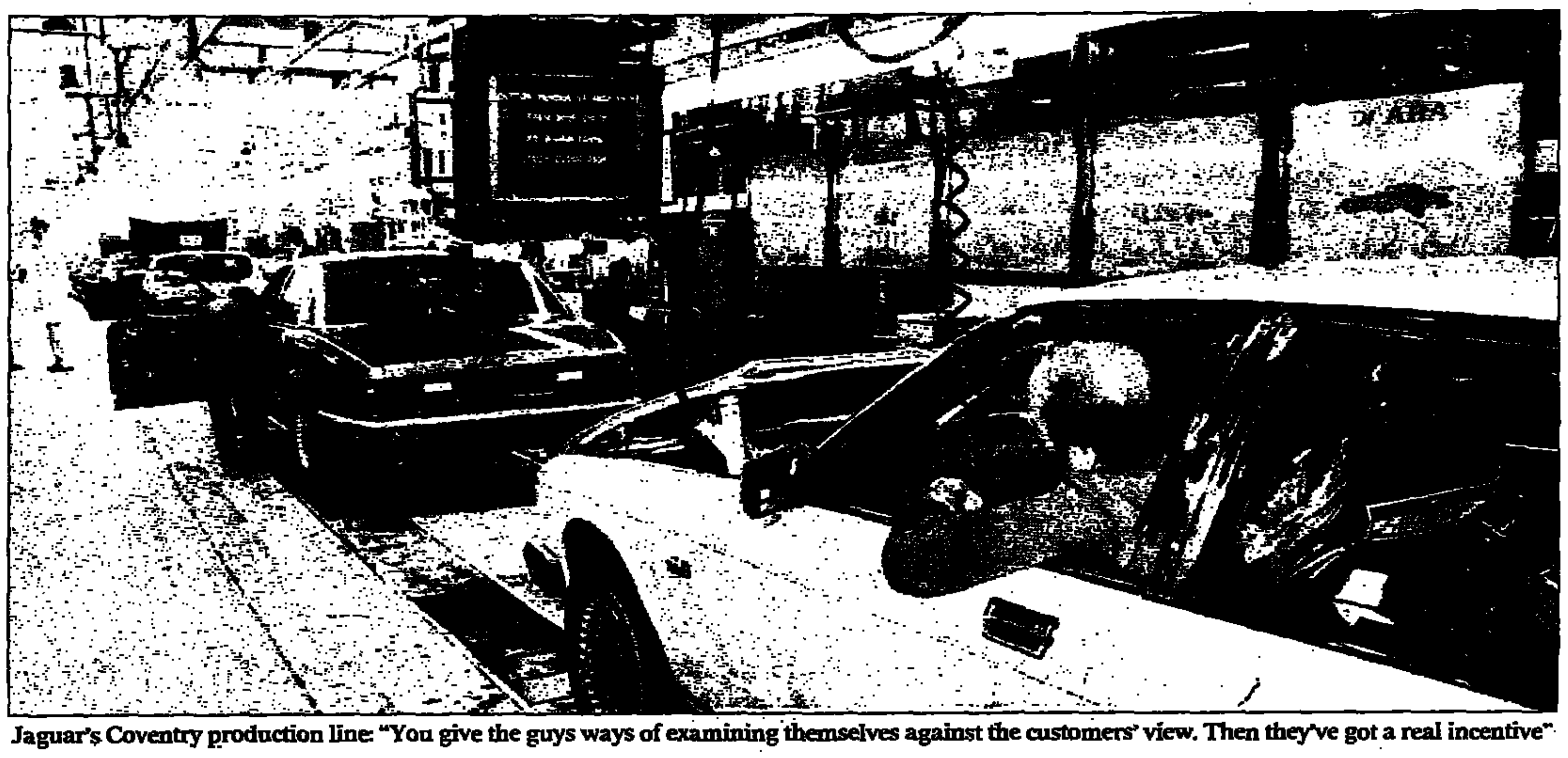
Passions for and against the car are included in *The Motoring Century*, a history of the RAC published yesterday as part of the organisation's centenary celebrations. The Marquess of Queensberry, better-known for bringing "gentlemanly" rules to pugilism, is revealed as an early road-rager who declared that he intended to carry a loaded revolver for the "purpose of shooting dangerous drivers".

■ WRITTEN by Piers Brendon, Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, the book also contains some of the more outlandish moves to curb perceived driving excesses 100 years ago. These included a wire which was stretched across the Slough-to-Maidenhead road in an apparent attempt to decapitate drivers, and the farmers who suggested that bombs be fitted to vehicles so that over-enthusiastic acceleration would trigger an explosion.

None the less, the car did relieve one big pollution headache for the late Victorians. At the end of the 1900s, each of Britain's three million horses, most of them in urban areas, littered the roads with between three and four tons of dung a year.

OFFER

READERS of *Car 97* can win a copy of *The Motoring Century*.
Send a postcard, to arrive by next Saturday, with your name and address to RAC Centenary Book, RAC, 14 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5BL. The first five picked will each receive a copy.



Jaguar's Coventry production line: "You give the guys ways of examining themselves against the customers' view. Then they've got a real incentive"

Jaguar joins top Asian cats

Alan Copps on how the once languishing UK carmaker has leapt up the league table for quality and reliability

Cars are getting better but are not improving as fast as motorists' expectations and even good makers can be let down by poor dealers. Those are the broad conclusions to be drawn from this year's J.D. Power survey of customer satisfaction, regarded as the best indicator of its kind in the British market.

But when it comes to individual makers, Britain's biggest car firms — Ford, Vauxhall and Rover — take a hammering, with Asian marques dominating the table for quality and reliability. There is one exception: Jaguar, which only a few years ago was almost a joke when it came to quality and reliability, made the top 10 for the first time and won a special award for being the most improved marque. The customer care offered by its dealers is said to be the best in the industry.

The maker with the happiest customers overall was Subaru, the Japanese four-wheel-drive specialist, whose cars powered Colin McRae to the world rally championship. Honda, which has never been out of the top three since the survey started four years ago, tied for second place with the Korean maker Kia, while another Korean newcomer, Daewoo, was fourth and Skoda, now a thriving part of the Volkswagen empire, was fifth.

When the list was broken down to individual models, Toyota's Corolla and Celica were the top two. Jaguar tied for eighth place with Nissan, just ahead of arch-rival BMW.

So what is it that has helped Jaguar, owned by Ford, to compete with these stars of the automotive firmament when even the best products of its parent company and Vauxhall and Rover are scrabbling around the foot of the table with Lada and Alfa Romeo?

Nick Scheele, Jaguar's chairman and chief executive, exuded delight at his award. "In the United States, where we sell 50 per cent of our cars, we targeted the J.D. Power survey as a benchmark for our progress. Because it runs over two years of ownership, it takes into account quality, reliability and service. You won't find a worker on the Jaguar production line who doesn't know where we stand in these rankings. We knew we had to improve and this was the best measure we could find. Our dealers have always been enthusiasts. Frankly, in the dark days I think we owed our survival to them, but now we are giving them the products they deserve."

Mike Beasley, director of manufacturing operations in Coventry, says getting that kind of quality takes more than simply introducing Japanese working methods. "We introduced radical changes with the unions which brought team-working to the shop floor. It's a question of combining the Japanese mindset with British ingenuity. You have to give the guys on the production line ways of examining themselves against the customers' view. Then they've got a real incentive to improve."

But the other key element has been skill. Unlike large volume manufacturers who can now rely on robots to keep rigid quality control, Jaguar with its wide range of tailor-made models and comparatively low volumes, still relies heavily on manpower. "You need skill and rigid discipline. That's how we got the launch of the XK 8 right first time," says Beasley.

The Jaguar award coincided with excellent news on the sales front with that outstanding new sports car helping the company achieve first quarter sales of 10,931, the best since 1990. So will Ford be trying to learn from Jaguar's improvement? Scheele, who although now an American citizen was born in Brentwood where Ford has its British headquarters, suggests not: "Let's just say we work independently of our parent company."

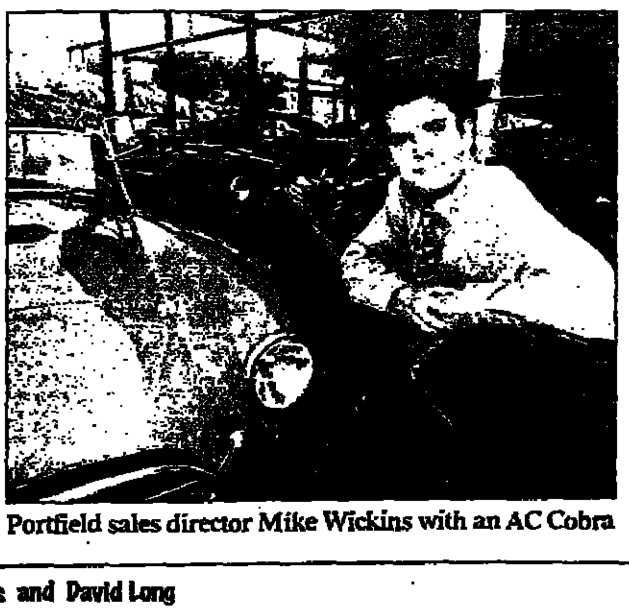
The Power survey is done in Britain with the help of *Top Gear* magazine and relies on the detailed experiences of 16,498 motorists who ran 87 models from 33 makers over two years. It is the large sample size and long-term information that has made it the most authoritative record of motoring experience.

For Subaru, the achievment of topping the satisfaction index is tempered. Ed Swatman, managing director, was delighted with his award but fears his chances to capitalise on it will be limited by further European Union quotas on imported Japanese cars.

RATINGS

GOOD	POOR
Subaru	Citroën
Honda	Renault
Kia	Peugeot
Daewoo	Land Rover
Skoda	Fiat
Mazda	Rover
Toyota	Vauxhall
Jaguar	Ford
Nissan	Alfa Romeo
BMW	Lada

Dawn of revival for a 96-year-old legend



Portfield sales director Mike Wickins with an AC Cobra

A new sales deal for the AC sports

Hopes for a fully-fledged revival of the proud name of AC cars were boosted this week when the new owners of the marque appointed their first dealership. *Eve-Ann Prentice writes.*

AC — one of Britain's oldest surviving makers, dating back to 1901 — was bought from receivers by Alan Lubinsky in December last year. Now Portfield Sports and Classics in Rochester, West Sussex have been given the pioneer dealership.

Portfield director Mike Ayling says: "Before the speed restriction was imposed on motorways in the 1960s, a Cobra was clocked doing 196pmh ... they really are fantastic cars. I am absolutely thrilled by the prospect of selling them and it is wonderful the company has been resurrected."

Portfield, which already deals in TVR, Aston Martin, Lagondas and Morgans, hopes to sell at least 12 Cobra MKIVs a year — at around £70,000 each — and there are plans to sell the latest version of the AC Ace towards the end of the year. The Cobra MKIV is custom-built in Weybridge, Surrey, based on the famous design perfected by Texan racing driver Carroll Shelby. Portfield describes its latest Ford V8 engine as "brutally fast".

The name AC is an abbreviation of Autocarrier, a 1907 model launched by the company's founders, John Weller and John Portwine, who set up their engineering workshop in South London in 1901.

In 1963, the Cobra's 196mph adventure on the M1 led to questions in Parliament. Two years later, it won the Sports Car World Championship.

Controlling interest in AC cars was sold to Autokraft and Ford in 1986 and in 1992 Brian Angliss acquired Ford's interests. But four years later, the company was put in the hands of receivers and devotees were beginning to fear the worst when Lubinsky's Pride Automotive Group set up the AC Car Group to step in and save the marque.

Lubinsky says: "We are in full production of the Cobra right now and are working to maintain and increase the AC presence in the buoyant market for high performance cars."

For more information call Portfield Sports and Classics on 01243 528500.

AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● LONDON

A406 Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks on Angel Road (North Circular Road) over the Lea Valley viaduct.

A306 Hammersmith Bridge. Closed both ways to general traffic for structural works. Expect congestion on both sides of the river.

A2400 Bloomsbury. Resurfacing work on Upper Woburn Place and east side of Tavistock Square.

M4 Chiswick area. Various weekend and overnight closures for work on elevated section between the juntion 2 on and off slip roads, also closures both ways on the A4.

M1 Hendon area. Major road works at Five Ways Corner, with no access to or from the A1 Great North Way.

● SOUTH-EAST

M40 Buckinghamshire. Long-term roadworks with contraflow between junctions 1a (M25) and 3 (Wycombe East).

A130 Sandon, Essex. Roadworks at Southend Road at the Gingerbread Hall Bridge, with width restrictions.

M27 Hampshire. Major roadworks with contraflow between junctions 8 and 10.

A31 Ringwood, Hampshire. Major roadworks with contraflow. Long delays at times.

A41 Hertfordshire. Lane closed eastbound on North Western Avenue from Hunton Bridge roundabout to Leavesden Green interchange.

M25 Surrey. Restrictions and lane closures both ways between Reigate and A3.

● SOUTH-WEST

M5 Bristol. Contraflow across Avonmouth Bridge with a 50mph limit.

A39 Cornwall. Construction work with temporary lights at times between Trispen and Carland Cross roundabout

M5 Gloucestershire Major roadworks with only one lane open at the roundabout junction 13 with the A419. Expect long peak-time delays.

A417 Barnwood bypass, Gloucestershire. Contraflow between the Zoons Court and the C&G roundabouts. Long rush hour delays.

A37 near Shepton Mallet, Somerset. Temporary lights at Wraxall Hill.

● MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

A1 Alconbury, Cambridgeshire. Reduced to one lane northbound.

A6 Lockington, Leicestershire. Temporary lights between the M1 J24 and Sawley Island.

A500 Stoke area, Staffordshire. Contraflow with only one lane open each way between Talke (A34) and Longport (A527 Porthill).

A5 west of M1, Staffs. Roadworks between A449 at Gailey and M6, J12.

● NORTH

A62 Hollinwood, Greater Manchester. Manchester Road reduced to one lane northbound for roadworks. Major delays expected in evening rush hour.

A585 near M55, Lancashire. Roadworks on Fleetwood Road, between Wesham Circle and Hellfire Corner, near M55 junction. Diversions in force.

M53 Merseyside. Bridge maintenance work at junction 2 (Birkenhead) with only one lane open each way on the Moreton Spur. Peak-time congestion.

A19 Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire. Major roadworks between Thornaby-on-Tees and the North Tees Industrial Estate, with 50mph limit. Lane closures every weekend and overnight.

A1058 Newcastle. Lane closures on Cradlewell bypass at Cornerhouse junction.

A61 Tankersley, South Yorkshire. Contraflow in place near the M1 junction.

M1 West Yorkshire. Major roadworks continue around the Leeds junction with lane closures and speed restrictions. Expect delays on the M1, M621, and Dewsbury Road.

M1 West Yorkshire. Narrow lanes both ways for works at the M62 interchange with 50mph limit.

● WALES

A48 Carmarthen. Temporary lights and lane restrictions on Pensarn roundabout (A484).

A44 between Llangurig and Eisteddfa Gurig, Powys. Temporary lights for roadworks near Glansevern Arms. Possible delays.

A483 Fabian Way, Swansea. Lane closures both ways near the dock entrance on main dual carriageway into Swansea from the M4.

● SCOTLAND

Aberdeen Queen Elizabeth bridge closed Southbound for roadworks. Diversions via Victoria Bridge and Menzies Road.

A74 Dumfries and Galloway. Contraflow between Beattock and the Harthop viaduct. Expect serious delays.

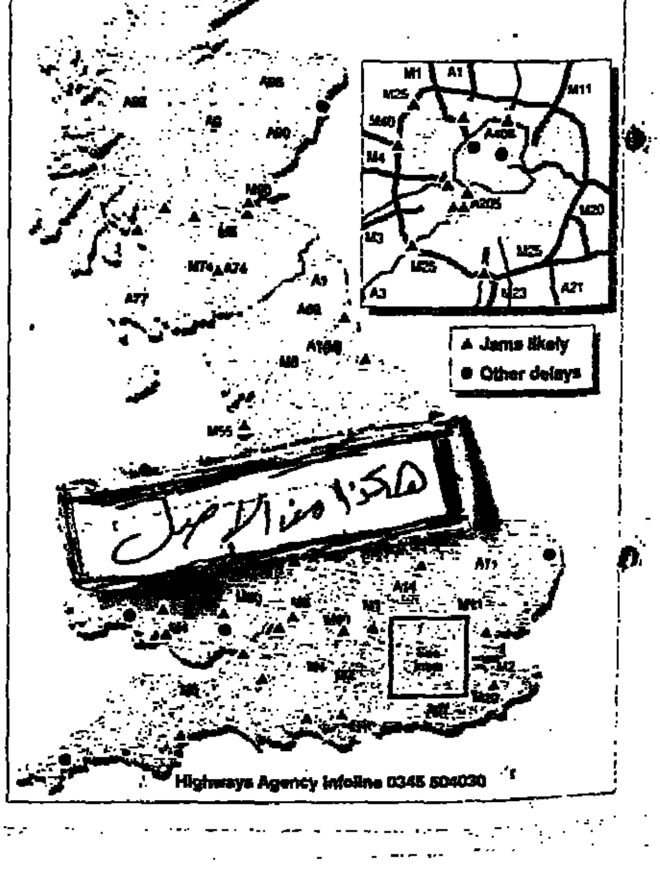
M8 Edinburgh. Major roadworks, with lane closures on roundabout at junction 2 (Newbridge Spur, M9). Delays on all approaches (M8, M9, A8 and A89).

A8 Port Glasgow, Inverclyde. Roadworks with eastbound lane closures at the Newark roundabout.

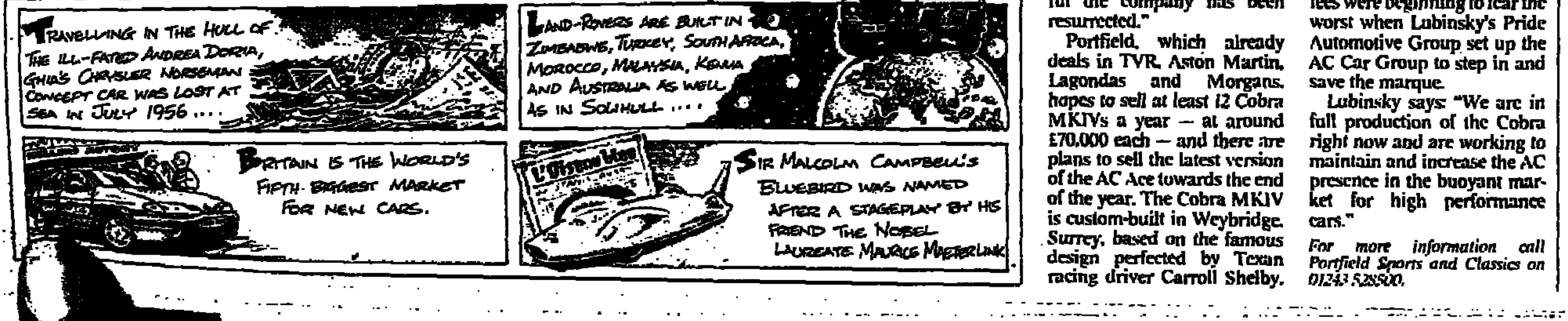
A78 Wemyss Bay, North Ayrshire. Temporary lights on Greenock road affecting traffic between Largs and Greenock. Expect delays.

M8 Renfrewshire. Closed eastbound at juntion 30 (Erskine Spur) for bridge repairs. Contraflow on westbound carriageway.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long


TRAVELLING IN THE HULL OF THE ILL-FATED ANDREA DORIA, GHIA'S CHRYSLER NORSEMAN CONCEPT CAR WAS LOST AT SEA IN JULY 1956 ...
LAND-ROVERS ARE BUILT IN ZIMBABWE, TURKEY, SOUTH AFRICA, MOROCCO, MALAYSIA, KENYA AND AUSTRALIA AS WELL AS IN SOLIHULL ....
BRITAIN IS THE WORLD'S FIFTH-BIGGEST MARKET FOR NEW CARS.
SIR MALCOLM CAMPBELL'S BLUEBIRD WAS NAMED AFTER A STAGEPLAY BY HIS FRIEND THE NOBEL LAUREATE MAURICE MAETERLINK

هكذا من الأصل

Sweden offers the full Monte

Saab's 900 convertible now comes in yellow. Why? And is it really motoring's equivalent of a dozen oysters? **Ian Morton** investigates

It has taken *three decades* as a motoring scribe, but at last I have done it. I have crossed Europe to road test a new colour. Yellow. Monte Carlo Yellow, no less, *and it was absolutely essential* to go to Monte Carlo to sample it. And yes, it drives well.

This is the latest hue — the 12th in fact — *to become* available on the Saab 900 convertible, and in case you *suppose* the Swedes have gone potty or become desperate, understand that the 900 convertible is a very important *model indeed: that June 10* sees the company's 50th birthday and this is by way of being a celebratory version.

The first production Saab convertible, the 900 of 1984, started life as no more than an *illustration* from the 900 saloon brochure with the superstructure snipped off with scissors by one of the firm's *designers*, Aribert Valenbreder: this clumsy concept was pinned to his studio wall for a year before a visitor, Saab US *marketing executive* Robert J Sinclair, spotted it and urged the company to pursue the *idea*.

Since the current *second*-generation 900 convertible was designed in parallel with *the 900* saloon *rather than* as an afterthought, its structural integrity is absolute: in some types of crashes, convertible *occupants* are *said to be safer* than those in the saloon.

Saab crash test procedures, meanwhile, uniquely include *collisions* with a dummy moose, because incidents involving large animals account for more than a quarter of all *Scandinavian road accidents*.

The complex roof mechanisms and motors of the current 900 convertibles are enclosed *within the* tonneau roof: this is referred to in the firm as "the *27-second* job" because that is the time the *roof takes to open or close and* "we do a lot of things you won't notice, but if we didn't, you would".

Saab makes and sells a bigger ratio of convertibles to saloons than any other car maker anywhere: in the UK *one Saab registration in four is* of a drophead, and Britain takes 16.2 per cent of all the convertibles the company produces. North America takes 47.6 per cent, Italy is third with 8.7 per cent. In all, more than 50 countries import it.

Though something of an oddball carmaker, Saab can *claim to have pioneered more innovations than any other* manufacturer, including series-production turbo-charging, headlamp wash/wipe, heated seats, *impact-absorbing* bumpers, pollen filters, asbestos-free brakes and manual *transmission* without a clutch pedal.

Saab soared to prominence with a *series of* giant-killing victories in the Monte Carlo Rally in the days when the *event meant something to* most people. The Principality is currently preparing for the Grand Prix and is also mark*ing the 700th anniversary of* the Grimaldi dynasty.

But back to the yellow. What profound philosophy, what *brooding northern sentiment*, might lie behind the choice? None, they said. They just needed a colour they were not already offering, and yellow was it and it's trendy anyway, and should attract women customers, who are important. *Women* already buy half the 900 convertibles sold in the US, the car's biggest market.

And doesn't yellow suit the 900 convertibles, they said. Indeed it does, bringing out the shape and projecting a very positive presence. Naturally I warmed to the posh and powerful version at £30,295. Buttercup paintwork, fragrant black leather, deep burr woodwork, chunky controls and tactile switchgear, solidly supple ride, lots of controlled oomph from 2.5 litres of V6 *engine working through* an automatic transmission lined with satin.

It was a lazy run through *the manicured wealth and* clean streets of Monaco, a long swishing haul up the winding roads above and beyond with the sun beating down on perfumed *hillsides* all around ... well, somebody had to help them with their celebration.

The successful convertible — *worldwide sales of this second*-generation model have more than doubled to 14,200 since its *launch* in 1994 — is not just *good news for Saab*. It is assembled in Finland at a place called Uusikaupunki — go on, say it, it throbs — and a fifth of the components by value comes from British suppliers. In the top car the proportion is higher still because the hide is Scottish *and the engine originates in* Vauxhall's plant in Cheshire.

Some people consider the 900 convertible rather sexy. *More so in yellow? The* car wearing the full Monte is being *portrayed* on UK advertising hoardings as "The motoring equivalent of a dozen oysters", or some such nonsense.

Can it be coincidence that more women are employed in the Saab design centre than in *any other similar undertaking* in the motor industry? Currently half the staff there are women; but the figure *has been as high as 60 per cent*. Saab arguing that the female touch *means* less aggressive styling and greater sensuality in the design.

I asked my hosts if they approved of the oyster implications, and they seemed doubtful. The 900 convertible *is a spacious four-seater, but* not many Swedes are being conceived in it, they thought. For one thing, only 0.3 per cent *of production* sells in Sweden even though the multi-layer power hood is designed to exclude the Arctic winter and you could roast a reindeer in *the heating system*.

For another, they said, their country is "too cold for that sort of thing". Perhaps it was *different in Britain, they wondered*. Perhaps, I conceded. As for me, thanks to an unfortunate encounter in Spain some years ago, *one whiff of an* oyster and I am very ill indeed.

SAAB 900

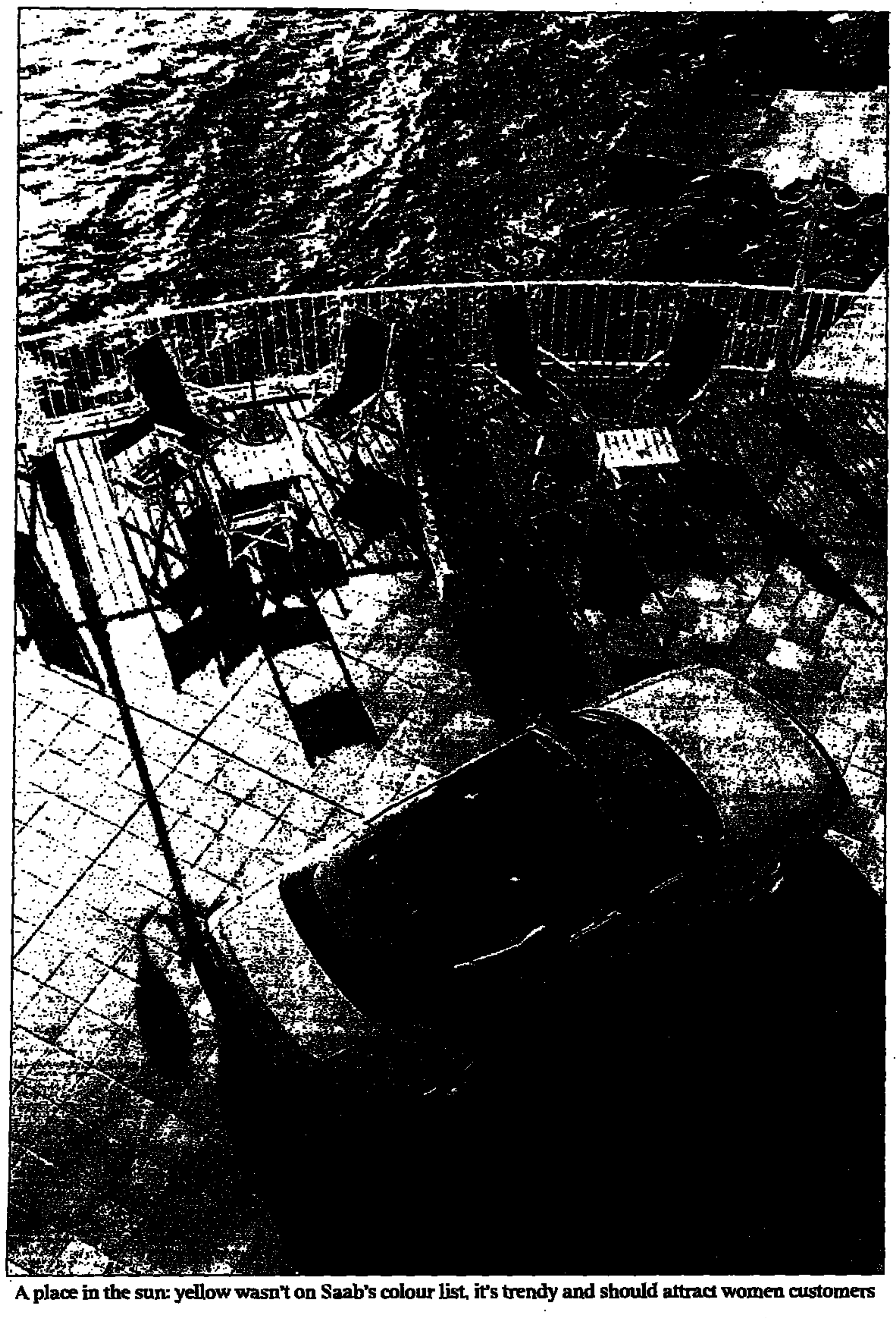
Engines: 2.5 V6 producing 170bhp at 5,900rpm; 2.0 turbo-charged *four-cylinder* producing 185bhp at 5,500rpm.

Performance: 2.5 V6 *0-60mph in* 9.2 secs, *max* 140mph; 2.0 turbo 0-60 in 8.6, max 144mph.

Economy: EU combined, 2.3 V6 auto 25.9mpg; 2.0 turbo *27.2* manual, 25 auto

Equipment: ABS brakes, power hood, climate control, driver's airbag, reach-adjustable steering *wheel, leather trim*, electric windows and door mirrors, headlamp and interior light fade delay.

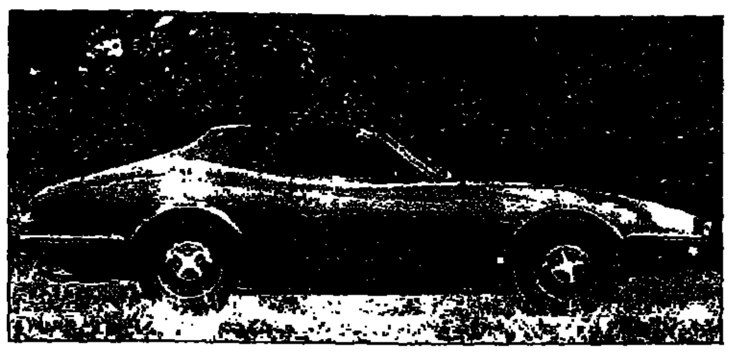
Prices: 2.3 V6 £30,295; 2.0 turbo £29,895.



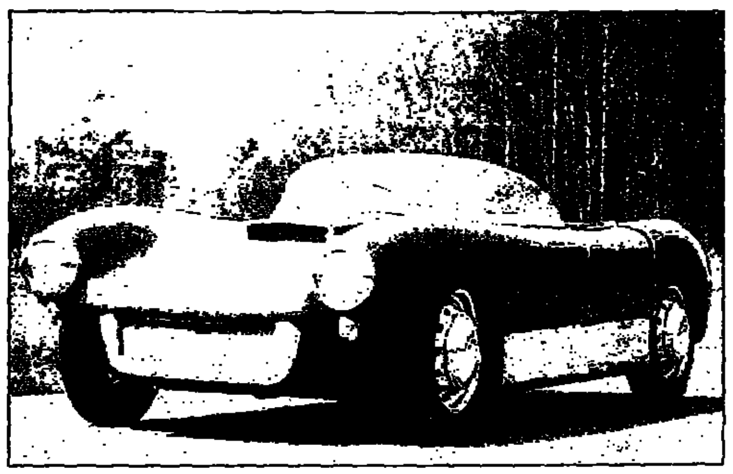
A place in the sun: yellow wasn't on Saab's colour list, it's trendy and should attract women customers

SAAB: A HISTORY

Taking off with a team of non-drivers



The 1965 Sonett *prototype* "Catherina", *a project* that failed to mature



Six 1956 *Sonetts* were built, but *rule changes meant they never raced*

SAAB — Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget — went into *motor-making* as a *diversification* from aircraft manufacture, telling a team of 20 of its aero-engineers to *design a car: half of them did not* even hold a driving licence.

Their effort, the Saab 92, unveiled in 1947, used an engine based on a *two-cylinder two-stroke unit from* German car-maker DKW. The only *vestigial* evidence of DKW today is that it is represented by one of the *rings in the Audi badge*.

Saab's first drophead, the Sonett, was conceived and designed as an unofficial project by one of the firm's test drivers, Bjorn Karlstrom: in 1956 they made six, intending to race them, but the competition rules changed *and the scheme foundered*. A second attempt at a drophead was Sonett 2, known in the firm as "Catherina". A 1965 prototype was *built, but also failed to mature*.

The firm hit the headlines anyway when it entered rallying, scoring consecutive Monte Carlo wins *in* 1961, 1962 *and* 1963 *courtesy of* Erik Carlsson. This amiable giant married Stirling Moss's sister, Pat, lives in Berkshire, and still fronts *major Saab public events*.

All Saab cars have incorporated the figure 9 — and will always do so — in recognition of their plane-making heritage; the Saab 90 and 91 were civil aircraft.

BMW gives a boost to hyperinflation

You can now be protected by 12 airbags — but the car might blow up, says **Helen Mound**

New cars *could soon* be equipped with a dozen airbags, claims BMW. And at the launch of its *latest airbag* innovation, a spokesman for the German carmaker admitted that if all the devices were to *deploy* at *one time*, the explosions would be sufficient to "probably break-up the car".

Launching *its new* headbag — an airbag designed to protect the driver and front passenger from severe *head injuries in* a side-on collision — BMW has brought the total of possible airbags in a *luxury* car to *12. Two front* airbags, two rear-passenger airbags in the back of the front seats, four sidebags and *now four* headbags. *It* would feel like being trapped inside a bouncy castle if they all went off at once.

But the company insists that it is highly unlikely for every airbag to be activated in one go, because *the sensors* are *intelligent* enough to know which devices to activate and different *types* of *collisions* trigger *different* sensors. For example, it says, a head-on accident is unlikely to set off side airbags, and, *depending* on the *force of the* crash, front airbags may not go off in a side-on collision.

BMW's new *tubular-shaped* headbag is hidden in the roof, and when triggered extends *diagonally across the front* side window. Attached at the bottom of the car's A-pillar (near the dashboard) and *the top of the* B-pillar (near the grab handle), it follows the curved roofline. When the sensors ignite *the device, the* inflatable tubular structure (ITS for short) bursts out from the roof lining in milliseconds. The *inflation causes it to* shorten as it forms a straight and rigid tube of padding across the window. And because it isn't folded away, like an ordinary airbag, it doesn't need such an aggres*sive explosion to inflate it*.

BMW fitted side airbags as standard on its 5 and 7 Series last year, claiming a 50 per *cent reduction in the risk of* injury from side-on collisions. The company has been examining accidents involving its *cars since 1976 and says side*-on collisions account for 21 per cent of all accidents, but are responsible for more than 36 per cent of all cases of injury.

Having fitted side airbags to protect the chest, BMW used *its accident research and com*puter simulation of car crashes to develop the headbag. The new airbag has several bene*fits; it helps reduce sharp* movements of the head that cause injury to the neck; it protects occupants from ob*jects hitting or entering the car* from the side; its tough fabric offers protection from glass *splinters when the side win*dow breaks; and its rigid structure stops the occupants from being thrown out of the car if it rolls over.

BMW says that 12 airbags is probably the maximum pro*tection possible in a car and* has no plans to fit its new headbag for rear passengers. The company *says it* only fits airbags where research shows a need, and as yet head injuries to rear passengers *have been minimal*.

BMW believes that the line the tubular airbag follows *corresponds to the eye-level of* occupants of virtually any size. A short driver who sits close to the steering wheel and a tall driver sitting *further* away would both benefit from the headbag. A spokesman did *admit that, "for a smaller* driver sitting far back it would be ineffective".

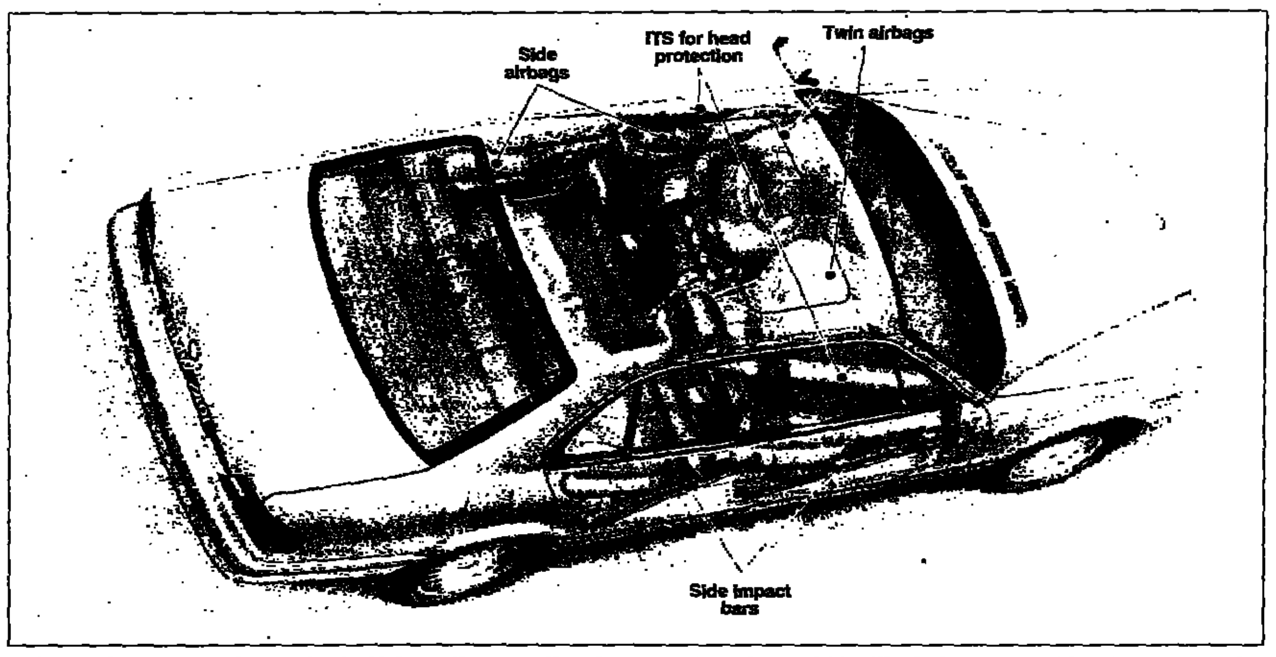
However a solution for different shaped drivers is on the way. BMW hopes to have intelligent airbags fitted in its *cars within five years. Using* electronics that can assess how tall and heavy the occupant is, their seating position, the car's acceleration and the type of *accident, the intelligent system* will be able to trigger the appropriate airbags with the required force to suit that particular situation.

It seems as if demand for airbags *has got a little out* of hand. In the same month that BMW has launched *its headbags*, and Volvo announced a device called airbag curtains, Toyota has been working on a "safety car" that features, among other ideas, a bonnet airbag to soften the blow to pedestrians.

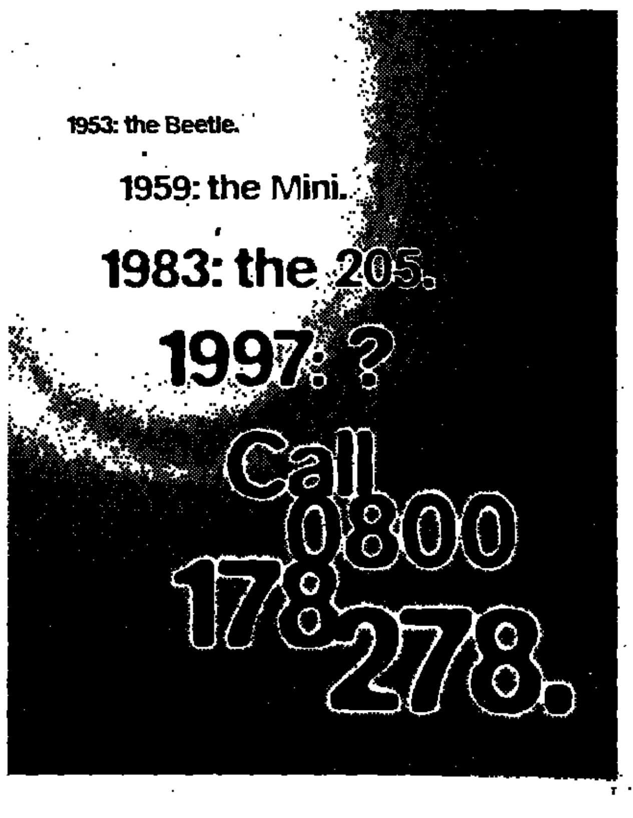
Meanwhile the Scandinavian authorities — who were instrumental in making airbags commonplace in modern cars — have passed legislation to allow car dealers to disconnect passenger airbags *if the customer requests it*, because of fears of decapitation to children in the front.

Fitted as standard to 5 and 7 Series models from September, BMW's new headbag will add £200 to the price of the cars. *Customers wanting the* device on the 3 Series will have to wait for the all-new models to be launched next year.

BMW's headbag under test: it also offers protection from splinters *if the window breaks*



All-round protection from BMW: *if they all went off at the same time, it would be like being trapped in a bouncy castle*



1953: the Beetle.
1959: the Mini.
1983: the 205.
1997: ?
Call 0800 178 278.

AUTHORISED DEALERSHIPS AT A GLANCE

IF YOU CANNOT FIND THE VEHICLE YOU DESIRE CONTACT YOUR AUTHORISED DEALER LISTED BELOW

Alfa Romeo

BERKSHIRE - S.G.T Alfa Romeo, Station Garage, Station Road, Taplow, (Near Maidenhead). Tel: 01628 605353

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE - Hallewell Chesham Road, Amersham. Gary Parker, Martyn Lunnon. Tel: 01494 722191

DORSET - CASTERBRIDGE at London Road, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1NR. Julie Mullins 01305 250650

HAMPSHIRE - Clover Leaf Cars A30, Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hants, RG24 7JD. Carl Goteer 01256 65221

HAMPSHIRE - Cleveland Cars Ltd Ash St (A323) Ash, Aldershot Hampshire GU12 6LZ. Phone 01252 334055

OXFORDSHIRE - Hallewell 379 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 2SS Contact William Griffiths 01865 772978

STAFFORDSHIRE - Platts of Longton Lightwood Rd Longton Stoke on Trent, Staffs, ST3 4JG. Tel: 01782 599400

SUSSEX - Wilson Purves Ltd 52A Brighton Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5BT Mike Whitaker 01403 221802

Aston Martin

KENT - Lancaster Sevenoaks Ltd 92 London Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1BA. David Bradshaw 01732 456300

NORWICH - Stratton Motor Company (Norfolk) Ltd Ipswich Rd Long Stratton. Charlie Skelton Tel: 01508 530491

Aston Martin

SURREY - H.W.M. LIMITED at New Zealand Avenue, Walton on Thames, KT12 1AT. Paul Spires 01932 220404

BMW

AVON - DICK LOVETT at Portwall Lane, Redcliffe Way, Bristol, Avon, BS1 6NG 0117 929 2402, 0117 982 2727

BEDFORDSHIRE - SIMS BMW. Shuttleworth Road, Bedford, in Bedfordshire MK41 0EP. Please Tel: 01234 360411

BEDFORDSHIRE - IVOR HOLMES 76 - 88 Marsh Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU3 2NJ. Contact 01582 576622

HERTFORDSHIRE - Specialist Cars London Road, Stevenage, Herts. Tel 01438 760200 Web http://www.specialistcars.co.uk/bmw/

KENT - Newmans of Canterbury Vauxhall Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1HA. Please Call 01227 454341

LONDON - COOPER BISHOPGATE 20 Paul Street, London, EC2A 4JH. For Any Information Tel: 0171 377 9811

LONDON - MLG of CHISWICK at 492 - 496 Chiswick High Road, London, W4 5TT. Please call 0181 996 1683

LONDON - BATES IN LONDON at 289 - 299 Kennington Lane, Vauxhall Bridge, London SE11 0171 582 6000

BMW

BMW

MIDDLESEX - Heathrow BMW Ltd Park House, Horton Road, West Drayton, UB7 8JD. Please call 0181 848 8866, 0802 611666

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - SYTNER DIRECT 165 Huntingdon Street, NG1 3NH. Used Car Manager Mel Smith 0115 924 1144

SURREY - Coombs of Guildford Slyfield Green Estate, Woking Road, Guildford GU1 1RD Freephone 0800 269 485

SURREY - CRONK BMW Chipstead, Surrey. For Everything BMW Contact Gary Young 01737 556789

WILTSHIRE - Dick Lovett (Specialist Cars) Ltd Ashworth Road, Bridgemead, Swindon SN5 7YH 01793 615958

CATERHAM CARS

DERBYSHIRE - John Noble Motorsport Unit 21 Station Lane Ind Est, Old Whittington Chesterfield. 01246 452887

OXFORD - Arrowstar Racing Ltd Centremead, Osney Mead Ind Est, OX2 0ES Pippa Newland 01865 201156

SURREY - Redline Components for Caterham Cars. 19 Timber Lane Caterham Surrey GR3 6LZ Tel: 01883 346515

FIAT

HAMPSHIRE - Cleveland Cars Ltd Ash St (A323) Ash, Aldershot Hampshire GU12 6LZ. Phone 01252 334055

HONDA

KENT - WHITEHOUSE HONDA 20 Broadway, Bexley Heath, Kent, DA6 7LN. Tel: 0181 303 6363 Fax: 0181 301 5753

JAGUAR

BERKSHIRE - Mead of Burnham 367 Bath Road, Slough Berks SL1 5QA. Contact Sales Team 01628 668361

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE - MERRITTS 44 London Road, Amersham, HP7 9DD. Roland Bomford 01494 725911

CAMBRIDGESHIRE - Marshall Peterborough Tyrrell Park, Boongate PE1 5PT Alan Wensak 01733 313335

KENT - Lancaster Sevenoaks Ltd 92 London Rd. email jaguar@sevenoaks.lancasterplc.com 01732 456300

LANCASHIRE - Dutton Forshaw Preston Portway, Ashton on Ribble, PR2 2DF. Roger Carroll 01772 722455

LONDON - WOODFORD JAGUAR 50 - 56 High Road, Woodford, London, E18 2AS. Steve Russell 0181 989 6644

LONDON - Stratstone of Mayfair 40 Berkeley Street, London, W1X 6EN Stewart Banks 0171 629 4404. Sun 0468 505672

SURREY - PALADIN JAGUAR at 33 - 35 Bell Street, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 7AJ. Keith Hopkins 01737 241160, 0374 415434

SURREY - GUY SALMON Portsmouth Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0TR. Tel: 0181 398 4222

WEST MIDLANDS - COLLIERS at 166 - 168 Birmingham Rd, Sutton Coalfield, B72 1BX Keith Gallaghan 0121 365 6151

WEST YORKSHIRE - Perrys Jaguar Northgate, Huddersfield, HD1 0AP. Contact Howard Jessop 01484 481200

JAGUAR

WEST YORKSHIRE - Appleyard Jaguar Bradford Northbrook Street, Canal Road, BD1 4RQ Mike Smith 01274 394439

LAND-ROVER

LONDON - LANCASTER CITY at 68 - 70 High Street, Stratford, E15 2NE New and Used Models 0181 522 0023

LEXUS

BERKSHIRE - Currie Motors Rose Kiln Lane, Reading. Mike Miller www.lexus.co.uk/curriemotors 01734 758877

ESSEX - Hills Automobiles (Woodford) Ltd 536/564 High Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0PR Robert Call 0181 504 9511

EXETER - YEOMANS EXETER. Hennock Road, Marsh Barton EX2 8NP. Call Helen Johnson 01392 434781

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - Mann Egerton 431-461 Nottingham Rd, Basford, Nottingham NG6 0FB. Mr Davies 0115 942 2242

LOTUS

BERKSHIRE - S.G.T Lotus, Station Garage, Station Road, Taplow, (Near Maidenhead) SL6 0NT. Tel: 01628 605353

DERBYSHIRE - Peter Smith Sports Cars. Station Road, Hatton, in Derby, Derbyshire, DE6 5EL. Tel: 01283 813593

mazda

LONDON - CURRIE MOTORS Wimbledon 166 The Broadway Wimbledon, SW19. Please call 0181 543 1131

MERCEDES

BERKSHIRE - SUNNINGDALE CARRIAGE COMPANY London Road, Berkshire. Telephone 01344 871200

ESSEX - London Road Mercedes 20-28 London Road, Romford. Tony Consuegra Sales Manager T: 01708 730484/Fax 748865

LONDON: BRADSHAW WEBB LTD Wandsworth Bridge, South London SW18 1TB. Call Mike Hutchinson 0171 493 7705

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - B&K Thomas Trent Bridge, Nottingham. Roger Wetherill 0115 982 2333, 0860 251435

MITSUBISHI

BEDFORDSHIRE - Claras Garage Ltd 2 Northill Road, Copel, Bedford. Contact Stuart Reynolds 01234 838122

BERKSHIRE - S.G.T Mitsubishi, Station Garage, Station Road, Taplow, (Near Maidenhead). Tel: 01628 605353

GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Mitsubishi Motors Cirencester Elliot Road, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 1YS. 01285 655799

KENT - WHITEHOUSE MITSUBISHI 20 Broadway, Bexley Heath, Kent, DA6 7LN. Tel: 0181 301 6111 Fax: 0181 301 5753

MOTOR WEY MITSUBISHI Putney London SW15 0181 871 1122. Weybridge, Surrey, 01932 857911. Open 7 Days

SOMERSET - Tincknell Mitsubishi Main Road, Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2LF. John Horgan 01278 652244

MITSUBISHI

SURREY - COURT & SMITH LTD Fishers House, Portsmouth Rd, Ripley, Nr Woking, Surrey. 01483 222184

WORCESTERSHIRE - Fields of Bromsgrove Sanders Road, Bromsgrove B61 7DQ. Contact Peter Field on 01527 579877

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BERKSHIRE - S.G.T Morgan, Station Garage, Station Road, Taplow, (Near Maidenhead). Tel: 01628 605353

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Jacqui Tait, the first woman to join the Conservative Whips' office, talks to **Andrew Pierce**

'I am sure that I entertained many sun worshippers'

TONY WHITE

Jacqui Tait: "When I'm travelling, I regard the car as my home. It has my office, clothes, bottles of water and serves as a dining room."

Jacqui Lait made Parliamentary history last year when she became the first woman the join the all-male bastion of the Tory whips office. Even Margaret Thatcher, as Prime Minister, only stepped into the portals with permission of the Chief Whip.

But with a husband, two brothers and five nephews, she is used to dealing with members of the opposite sex. Currently defending a majority of 6.600 at Hastings & Rye. Mrs Lait has had plenty of experience with truculent men. She worked behind the bar at Strathclyde University and specialised in ejecting drunken customers.

How did you first learn to drive?

I had driving lessons for my 17th birthday from my mother. The driving school cars were Triumph Heralds. It is a slur on cart horses to say that they drove like them.

What was your first car?

A Mini Countryman, which had so much mileage that when I had it serviced, after a 6,000-mile trip to Portugal, I was told they never expected to see it again. I used it for years afterwards.

STEERING COLUMN

What car do you drive now, and why?

A four-litre Jaguar saloon. My mother drove Jaguars, so I was used to them.

Do you like driving?

I love it. But I am a rotten passenger and cannot sit in the back reading maps. I have been driving automatics for years now, but often long for a nice manual gearbox to have fun with.

What is your most hated car?

Any boy racer, of any age, in any car who gets too pushy.

What is your dream car?

A new Jaguar, but still a saloon. I need something that is both fast and comfortable. When I'm travelling, I regard the car as my home. It has my office, clothes, bottles of water and serves as a dining room too. It is usually littered with sandwich packets and empty water bottles.

What is your worst habit in the car?

My husband informs me it is taking out a contact lens at one set of traffic lights, cleaning it, popping it back in at the next set and so on. What he does not seem to grasp is that my eyes are not equally bad, so they adjust over short distances.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

I don't mind other motorists. It is cycle couriers, who either sit in my blind spot or try to pass me on the inside after I have signalled I am turning left. Motorcycle couriers are not much better. Practically all the scratches and dents on the car are a result of couriers driving up the wrong side of the road towards me sneaking between cars in non-existent spaces.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

Changing into full evening rig in the car takes great skill. The last time I did a complete change was on the seafront in Porthcawl, on a blazing hot June Saturday after the Welsh Tory party conference. I am sure that I entertained many sun worshippers as I struggled to change decorously.

What do you listen to in the car?

Radio 4 for extended news, but mainly Classic FM. On long journeys, an opera cassette. I wish I had a radio which would automatically change frequencies.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

The last time was in the 1960s. The first set was when I was driving with my brother out of Glasgow to watch a rugby international at Murrayfield. The second was nine months later, that time for crossing a stop sign. Since then my licence has been clean.

If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?

Bring the A32 and A259 up to modern standards without delay. It would also do much to strenghten our local enonomy.

What is your favourite car advertisement?

Pass.

Saddle up and ride off with your wheels

Families are increasingly taking their bikes by car — but what's the best way? **Hilary Stone** looks at the cycle racks on the market

Traditional roof racks can even be fitted to glamour cars such as Porsche's Boxster. But they increase fuel consumption — and beware of low barriers at car park entrances

Bicycles are becoming more a lifestyle accessory, with the mountain bike in particular now an integral part of family life.But the best leisure cycling is rarely done within a town or city; most riders prefer to seek quiet roads or picturesque off-road routes — which means carrying their bikes by car to their destinations.

Unless you have a large estate, or pull the bike apart every time you go out, some form of carrying rack is essential. Buying a rack for the first time can be a perplexing experience as there are several types and a vast range of models, but every car owner, whether of an Porsche or Citroën 2CV, will find there's one to suit their needs.

ROOF RACKS

■ THE traditional solution, with cycle fittings. They increase fuel consumption by between 15 and 25 per cent, but it is easy to carry three, sometimes four, bikes and there are no hassles with obscured numberplates or lights.

There are three types: those to carry the bikes upside down, clamping handlebars and saddles (not recommended because it stresses them in a way they are not desinged for and the bikes are less stable); bicycles right way up with front wheel removed; and right way up with a wheel trough and support arm. Right way up with front wheel removed is the choice of many pro bike teams, bikes are quick to load/unload. But for most, right way up with a wheel trough is best. Do not exceed the recommended maxiumum weight limit.

Leading manufacturers, such as Automaxi or Thule, make fittings to suit practically all cars. Locks are a worthwhile extra. And don't forget your extra height: many bikes are damaged by height-restricting barriers at car parks.

My favourite system comprises Thule's best roof bars combined with the Thule Tour cycle carrier, which is exceptionally secure and kind to both car and bike. Elite San Remo (£17.95 each) fittings will fit most roof bars and are the only ones available for front wheel-out fitment.

TOW BAR MOUNTED

■ WILL carry two, three or occasionally four bikes. Fuel consumption is barely affected, but a tow bar and electrics are required, which adds £100 or more to the cost.

There are two main types, fitting either directly to the tow ball or to a plate behind it. The tow ball-mounted type (Pendle does one for three bikes at £78) are quick and easy to fit and great for those who have a continental-style towbar with integral tow ball.

Most tow bar mounted racks use two support arms from which the bikes — which need padding to prevent damage — are hung. Attachment loops for fixing straps help and can be used with a lock. Another type supports each bike by the wheels and with a central support tube. These are kind to the bikes but are heavier, more expensive and difficult to store. Pendle makes a great wheel support rack costing from £120.

We recommend the Pendle (£78) and Witter (£56.99) plate-mounted tow bar racks.

STRAP-MOUNTED

■ THE most popular type, but with many pitfalls. They attach to the boot or rear door with straps and carry the bikes on two arms. The bikes need padding to prevent damage. Because the bikes obscure the numberplate and lights, most will need a numberplate lighting board.

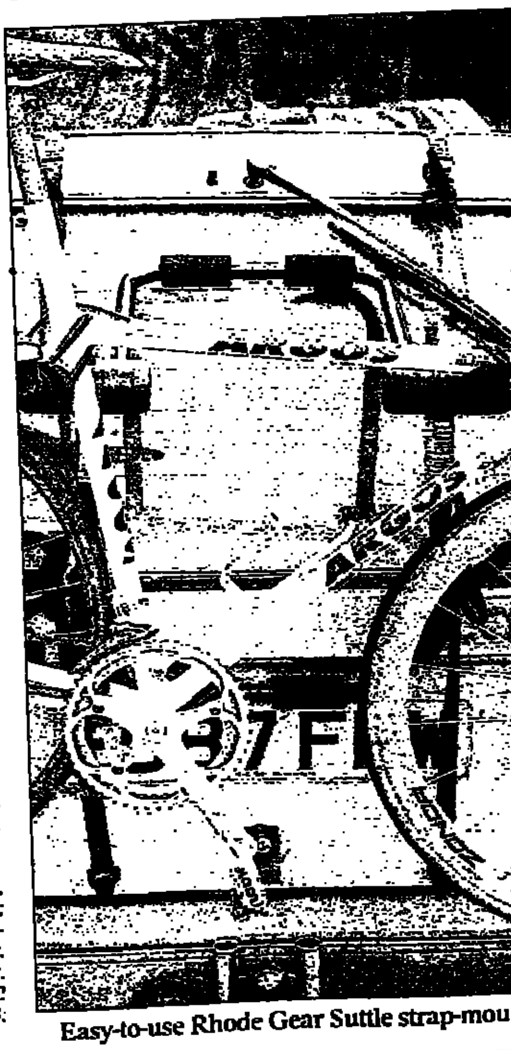
There are several designs that mount the bikes up high (Halfords, Bell Sport, Automaxi, Rhode Gear or Hollywood) to avoid this problem, but, as with roof racks, they increase fuel consumption.

Cars with fibreglass rear boots or doors cannot use this type of rack and those with all glass rear doors need kits to secure the straps available from Rhode Gear and Automaxi. The best have six straps and easily adjusted arms with a good choice of positions.Get the straps tight, particularly the lower two, which should be tightened after the bikes are mounted. Strap hooks need to be generously sized and plastic coated. Rhode Gear, Graber, Pendle, Automaxi, Bell Sport and Hollywood are recommended.

OTHER TYPES

■ FOR 4x4 owners most manufacturers make racks that attach to the rear-mounted spare wheel and have arms like the tow bar-mounted versions. For carrying bikes on a sports car boot lid, Automaxi offers a two-cycle carrier that fits its standard Maxi Back Load system which, with rack and cycle carrier, costs £240.

Suppliers include Automaxi, 01525 383131; Elite, 01664 444513; Graber, 0115-985 5706; Hollywood, 0181-805 3088; Rhode Gear, 0181-954 7798; Paddy Hopkirk, 01525 850800; Pendle, 01282 609555; Thule, 01275 340404; Witter, 01244 341166.



Easy-to-use Rhode Gear Suttle strap-mounted rack

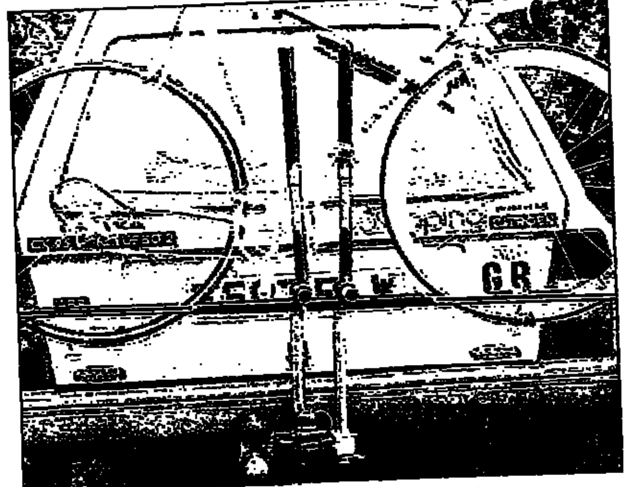
BIKE RACKS AND THE LAW

■ ANY LOAD attached to your car must be properly secured. The maximum all-up weight of the car should not be exceeded.

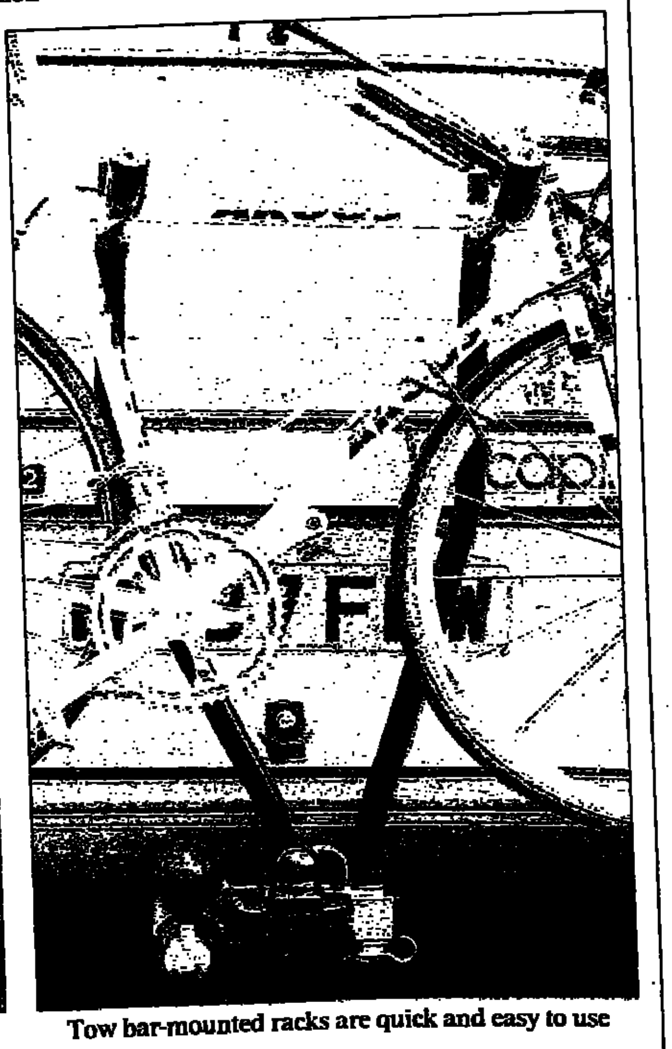
■ THE biggest problem arises from rear-mounted racks obscuring lights and numberplates; last summer, several police forces made a special point of cracking down on this. Lights must be clearly visible from all normal angles and the numberplate must not be obscured.

■ IT IS not good enough to simply hang a numberplate from the rack: it must be illuminated as well. With all but a few high mount rear racks, it is essential to use a proper lighting board.

■ LIGHTING kits are available from Halfords and Automaxi; with modern cars, it's wise to get them professionally fitted.



Wheel support racks can be used when towing a caravan



Tow bar-mounted racks are quick and easy to use

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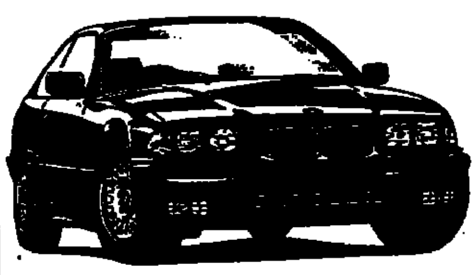

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SPARE PARTS

■ WITH modern tyres giving motorists ever-increasing mileage, manufacturers need to offer something else to attract customers in a *highly*-competitive sector of the market. Avon Tyres have come up with the CR322, which promises more miles per gallon on a wide spectrum of *mid-range cars*.

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The tyres are available in more than 20 sizes.

■ THE busiest time *in* the used car market is fast approaching, and latest research shows that the average price paid for a privately bought secondhand car has gone from £3,900 to £4,200 *in the past year*.

The research was done by Equifax-HPI, the company that can check the status of any used car and will report, among other things, whether it has been stolen, has finance owing on it or has been written off.

Tony Worthy, managing director, says: "This is a big increase compared to inflation. We believe there are two reasons. *First*, there has been an increase in disposable income. Second, the 'nearly new' bug has caught on fast as people realise they can get more for their money by buying used.

"But the increase rings warning bells. *For example*, we have nearly six million vehicles subject to outstanding finance on our database and in January one in eight cars checked were recorded there."

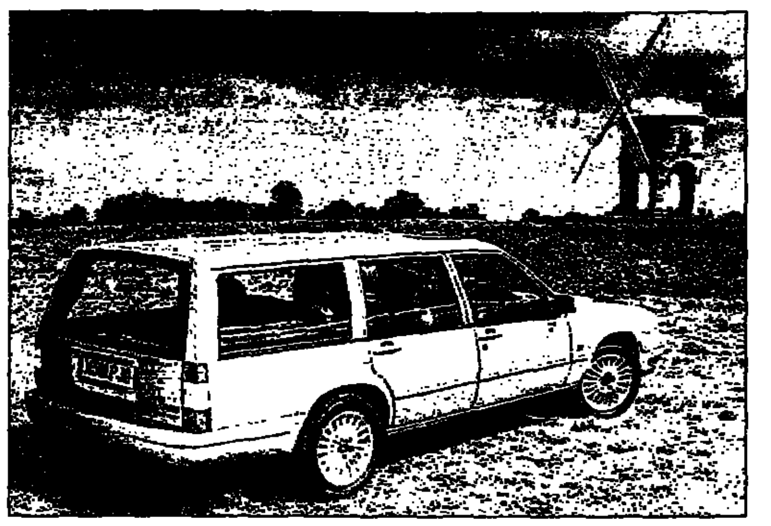
HPI hotline: 01722 422 422.

To Scotland in a weatherproof castle

Robert Richardson

shelters in Volvo's V90

ROAD TEST



Volvo V90: never mind the excitement, feel the sense of security

No cruising along some sun-soaked corniche for an hour or so on silken tarmac for this test, but 950 miles, starting and finishing in East London traffic with copious motorway, Edinburgh, the Lake District (including Shap) and assorted country roads in between.

And, for much of the time, Gothic weather: serious wind and rainfall that would have done wonders for shares in Noah and Sons (Arks R Us) plc. Throughout it all, the cabin of the *V90 (until recently called the 960)* estate was indifferent, solid as a castle on wheels, effortless and smooth.

Part of the marque's legend is that it is not exciting; true, but we felt *incredibly* secure. The V90 is comfortable enough to drive for hours and emerge from the front seat without terminal stiffness and offers the advantages of size without its drawbacks. With rear-wheel drive, the turning lock is amazing, the car *seeming almost to glide sideways*.

I was changing gear on the rev counter rather than the speedometer. You can move up quickly, going into fifth at around 50mph, when the engine *still feels* comfortable at between 2,000 and 3,000rpm, reducing fuel consumption. Volvo has official figures of course, but my experience on a wide variety of road and traffic conditions over a week worked out at about 10 miles for £1 *(an unusual measurement system*, perhaps, but you get the point).

The target market for the V90 is my generation — put a man on the Moon, can't program the video — apparently so we can take the *grandchildren out. The loading area* is ample for assorted bikes and there is a cage guard that folds down from the roof for the dogs or recalcitrant infant; the built-in child's seat in the *back allows junior to sit high enough* up to see and not get bored.

On the down side, pedals were a little close together, leading me to operate accelerator and brake simultaneously occasionally, and a *warning signal should* you get out having left the lights on would be useful, but this is carping. The V90 is rugged, with enough refinement for motoring that, if not sophisticated, is perfectly civilised. If you want to give the *grandchildren some excitement, take them* to the movies; if you want them to be safe, ride to the cinema in this car.

The word "barge", which is so often perjoratively attached to the term "executive", is no *longer applicable to this car, writes Alan Copps.* Perhaps the most surprising thing about the V90 is its handling.

Volvo has invested vast sums in *recent years adding a sporty edge to* its "safety-conscious load lugging" image in an attempt to attract younger buyers. But somehow the top-of-the-range, leather and wood-*finished estate is the last place you'd* expect that switch to be apparent. That the car handles and rides as well as it does shows how thorough Volvo has been in applying the *lessons learnt in touring car racing to* this executive flagship.

Stiffer *anti-roll* bars at the front and a redesigned multilink axle at the rear, together with improved power steering give the driver much greater "feel" for the road.

I'd never understood why the big *Volvo estate was such a popular* vehicle for the suburban school run before. It may look a bit unwieldly, but in town the steering is a pleasant surprise. With just 3.5 turns lock-to-*lock, it has a turning circle of* 9.7 metres and the car manouvres as neatly as many smaller hatchbacks. This agility, together with the attention paid to safety, suggests that *Volvo's corner of the school-run* market will not suffer from its change of image. In fact the 900-series commands one of the highest rates of owner loyalty of any large car.

There is only one major problem, for such a large car, the space around the pedals seems extraordinarily small, surely something which Volvo's engineers could solve?

VOLVO V90 GLE

Engine: Six-cylinder, 24-valve 2.5-litre giving 170bhp at 5,700rpm or 3-litre giving 204bhp at 6,000rpm.

Transmission: *Five-speed* manual or four-speed automatic.

Performance: 0-62mph in 9.7 seconds (9.1 for 3-litre). *Max speed 130mph.*

Economy: Urban 18.2mpg, extra urban 34.4mpg, combined 25.9mpg. (Executive 3-litre model 16.6mpg, 32.5mpg and 23.9mpg).

Equipment: Power steering, *anti-lock brakes, side airbags.*

Price: £22,450-£31,500.

FORECOURT

■ THE *Space Wagon* from Mitsubishi is all too often overlooked amid the flood of new people-carrier style cars such as the Ford Galaxy that have recently arrived on the scene, *writes Vaughan Freeman*.

The Space Wagon is a cheap *seven-seater, reports CAP Black Book*, but one that suffers from being sorely under-publicised.

For those who have stumbled on the secret, this is a car as tough as its four-wheel drive *Shogun* cousin, that can accommodate just as many passengers, costs a substantial amount less and keeps its value.

Best buy is the 1.8-litre GLX petrol and any of the diesels. Expect to pay *£12,995 for a 1995 M-reg 2.0 litre* GLX TD with average mileage.

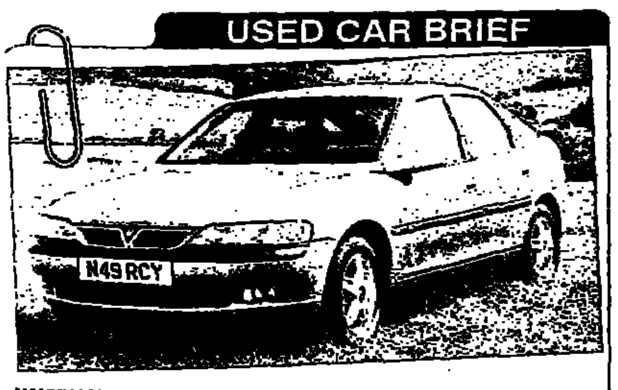
The Space Wagon has been around since 1984 and is a genuine people-carrier that has lived for too *long in the shadow of the Renault* Espace. High mileage cars and tatty *models from the mid-Eighties* should be avoided. Watch out for blue exhaust smoke, oil leaks from the engine and noisy pumps.

■ THE Audi 100 Avant (1991-1995) is capacious, economical to run and *features* a long-lasting galvanised body. Unfortunately, because of Audi's increasing image as one of the more affluent cars on the road, it is also expensive to buy, not very *rapid and quite rare.*

Because of its image and impres*sive load-carrying capacity, this is a* car much favoured in estate form by the ski set. But it is just as practical for carting large numbers of children around and has a good reputation for safety. The only drawback is that it can be a bit thirsty if *restricted to town driving.*

Low mileage recent models in good condition do best. Best buy is the 1993 2.6 E automatic, which sells for around £13,500. Cars to avoid *are any with above average mileage* and the 2-litre automatic.

USED CAR BRIEF



VAUXHALL VECTRA

Vauxhall spent £800*million revamping* its tried and trusted Cavalier then dumped the old name in favour of its Euro-tag Vectra. Introduced two years ago, the car received only a luke-warm reception initially, despite its fancy mirrors. Critics said it was not different enough, although it is effectively a brand new car. Engines include 1.7 and 2-litre diesels, plus 1.6, 1.8 and 2-litre petrols, and 2.5-litre V6. Vectra is available as a four-door saloon, five-door hatch, and estate.

✓ **GOOD NEWS:** The Vectra is backed by a huge dealership network, there are plenty around and in *its two years on the road the car* has won over many early critics, and is now a firm favourite with the toughest critics of all, the high mileage company car driver's. Roomier than the Cavalier, well equipped and well built, and quieter too than the Cavalier.

BAD NEWS: Early cars, designed, with *an* eye to the German market, suffered from seats *that, to UK bottoms*, were deemed too hard and have since been changed. Early cars also had no height adjust to the steering wheel, though dashboard a vast improvement on the Cavalier.

LOOK FOR: Vectras fitted with the more modern ECOTEC engines are the ones to go for rather than the 1.6 eight-valve that came from *the Astra. Best option is probably* the 2-litre 134bhp ECOTEC, though for optimum power there is *a 2.5-litre V6 giving 168bhp.*

AVOID: Base model cars such as the Envoy. Instead seek out LS specification models with sunroof and electric front windows, *or CDX for real indulgence* with twin airbags, air conditioning and electric *windows all round.*

INSURANCE: Cover from *AA Insurance (0600 444777)* on a 1995 N-reg 2-litre Vauxhall Vectra five-door hatchback costs a 55-year-old professional male, living in Winchester with full no claims bonus £226 a year fully comprehensive. A similar female pays £223. A 22-year-old male, with one year no *claims living in* south London pays £1,360, and a similar female pays £1,099.

△ **SAFETY:** With the Vectra, the Cavalier's safety levels, rated as average by the Department of Transport, moved on with the addition of anti-lock brakes as standard across the range, while the range-topping CDX gets dual airbags.

£ **PRICE:** Expect to pay £10,000 for a 1995 N-reg 1.6-litre 8valve Envoy five door; £10,250 for a 1.7-litre turbo diesel Envoy five-door; £10,750 for a 1995 N-reg 1.8-litre 16valve LS four door; £13,500 for a 1996 N-reg 2-litre 16valve GLS four door; £13,000 for a 2.5-litre V6 GLS four door and £17,000 for a 1995 N-reg 2.5-litre V6 CDX four door automatic.

REPLACEMENT PARTS: (prices include VAT): Full exhaust £250; catalytic converter £225; front brakepads (pair) £25; alternator (exchange) £250; headlamp £120.

OVERALL: *The Vectra benefits from drawing on its bigger brothers,* such as the Omega. Despite early misgivings, the Vectra clearly offers more equipment, more room, better safety *and some improved engines compared to the Cavalier.* Not a wildly exciting car, but one that is supremely able and it has got those mirrors.

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A sensible way to start a new era

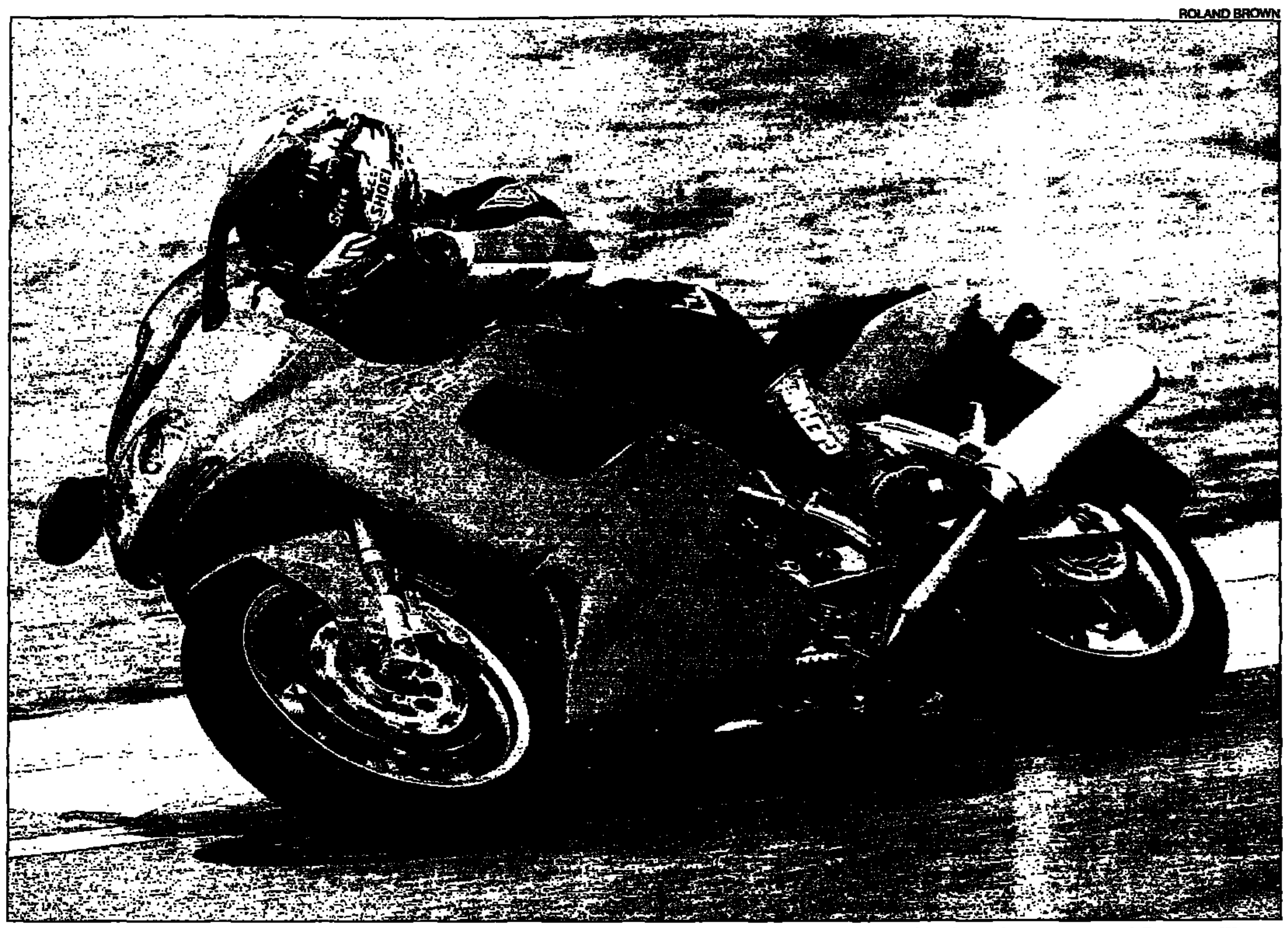
Ducati's ST2 sports-tourer appeals to the head as well as the heart, says **Roland Brown**

It's appropriate that Ducati's first new model since the firm was taken over last year should not be a super-sports machine, all sleek styling and outrageous performance, but the ST2, a more rounded and sensible sports-tourer. Pure sportsters, such as Ducati's gorgeous 916, succeed by appealing only to the heart; sports-tourers have to capture the head as well.

Few sports-touring riders would have been tempted by a Ducati in recent years as the Bologna firm struggled through a cash crisis that resulted in lost production, long delays for customers and reliability problems. But now the overdue invoices have been paid off by Texas Pacific, the American investment group that bought a 51 per cent stake in Ducati last September. Texas Pacific insists that a new Ducati ere has begun: the ST provides the perfect opportunity to prove it.

The ST2 has the Ducati trademarks of a big V-twin engine and tubular steel "ladder" frame. But its bodywork, designed as much for practicality as style, cannot match the beauty of the more streamlined 916. The new bike's engine is based on the single overhead camshaft, two-valves-per-cylinder unit from the 900SS (hence the ST2 name: an eight-valve ST4 is due next year). The motor is enlarged to 944cc, cooled by water instead of air and oil, and fed by a fuel-injection system in place of carburettors.

ROLAND BROWN



Ducati ST2: designed as much for practicality as style, it cannot match the beauty of the more streamlined 916, but it's fast and fine-handling

Chassis design and geometry could easily come from one of Ducati's traditional sports models, but the ST2 differs by incorporating touring features such as a fairly tall windscreen, large fuel tank, centre-stand and even the option of colour-matched luggage panniers. When you fire up the engine, there's a familiar V-twin rumble, but the riding position is fairly roomy and relaxed, with a gentle lean forward to the slightly raised handlebars.

The ST2 was more at home on the roads of southern Spain than on the Jerez racetrack at which the launch was based. Its engine produces a respectable peak output of 83bhp at 8,500rpm, but is most impressive at lower revs. From below 50mph in top gear, the softly-tuned V-twin's mid-range torque combines with crisp fuel-injection response to send the bike storming forward at a touch of the throttle.

That makes for swift overtaking on the road and, along with a slick six-speed gearbox, allows effortless high-speed riding. The Ducati is smooth until about 6,000rpm, or 100mph in top gear, when its handlebars begin to tingle.

Although the ST2's top speed is a respectable 140mph, its softly-tuned engine runs out of breath at about 8,000rpm and doesn't encourage hard riding in the way a sportier machine would.

Much the same is true of the chassis, which is more than adequate for rapid road riding but has too much suspension movement to match the precision of the finest sportsters. That made the ST2 competent rather than inspired on the track; on the road, the balance of comfort and control provided by the Japanese-made Showa front forks and rear shocks is just about right. And the sports-tourer's new generation Brembo front brake calipers give more stopping power even than the 916.

Other features are mostly good, too, although the lipped screen generates enough wind turbulence to give a noisy ride if you are tall. The fuel tank holds a generous 21 litres, the neat instrument panel includes a fuel gauge and a clock, the seat is broad and well-padded and the mirrors have split-image lenses (a first for bikes) providing wider rear vision. A passenger is well catered for as well, with plenty of room plus a sturdy grab-rail, although the Ducati lacks the tailpiece luggage hooks that are a useful feature even of many smaller bikes.

Talk of luggage provides one reminder of the old Ducati; the integrated panniers will not be available until September, although deliveries of the bike, which costs £8,900, begin at the end of this month.

This will not help the firm's new management to persuade sports-touring riders — a far more pragmatic bunch than Ducati's hedonistic sports bike customers — that the ST2 can match the efficiency and build quality of rivals such as Honda's ever-popular VFR750F.

On the evidence so far, though, Texas Pacific is very *serious about quality, to the* extent of committing more than £40 million to improving production facilities in the next three years.

Maybe the ST2 is the kind of bike to respect rather than, like the 916, to fall madly in love with — but it's a fast, fine-handling and reasonably practical machine with plenty of Ducati's traditional V-twin character. If it approaches Japanese levels of reliability — and that's a big if — the ST2 deserves to be a hit.

DUCATI ST2

Engine: 90-degree V-twin, four-valve, 944cc produces 83bph at 8,500rpm.

Transmission: Six-speed gearbox. Chain final drive.

Performance: 0-60mph in 3.5 seconds, maximum speed 140mph.

Price: £8,900 (plus £350 on-the-road charge): £9,500 with panniers from September.

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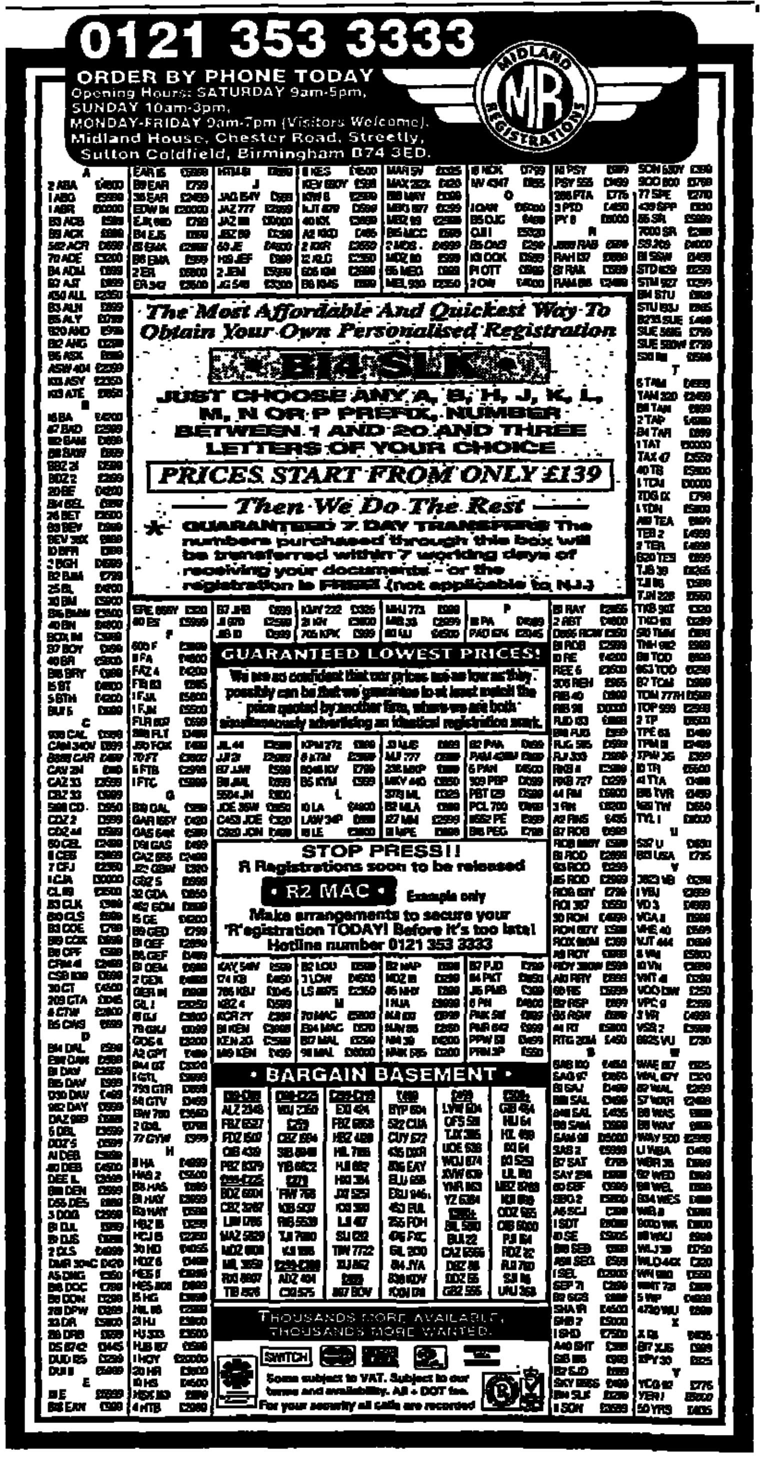

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Alan Copps discovers where he can fill up — at only 39p a litre — with what could be the fuel of the future

‘A car that runs on gas sounds scary to a lot of people’

Driving round the broken streets of a north London industrial estate trying to find the gas depot where I could refill the tank on my Honda Accord, I began to wonder whether liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) could really be a fuel of the future. Then I found the place, filled the tank and looked at the bill: 39p a litre. I began to think again.

With the unleaded petrol I usually buy costing close to 60p a litre, even the warning that LPG might be about 20 per cent heavier on fuel consumption paled into insignificance. If the fuel was 33 per cent cheaper, what would it matter?

Filling up proved no more difficult than filling up with petrol, although with variations. The Accord, like most LPG vehicles at present, is a dual-fuel car with separate fillers for gas and petrol. The gas one obviously has to be sealed, so it required the services of Brian Sisson, manager of Calor's London Centre, to show me how it was done, but then I've often hankered after the days of personal service on the forecourt. A twist connected the nozzle to the filler valve, a press on the button started the meter and a squeeze on the trigger just like any other filler was all it took.

It is a routine that Calor believes will become familiar to many more British motorists in the near future. The first of a network of filling stations supplying LPG has just opened in South-east London. It comes in a form called Calor Autoblend and is being marketed under a joint agreement with Jet. The two companies are confident that once that 39p figure starts appearing on the forecourt billboards interest will gather and my backstreet experience will become a thing of the past.

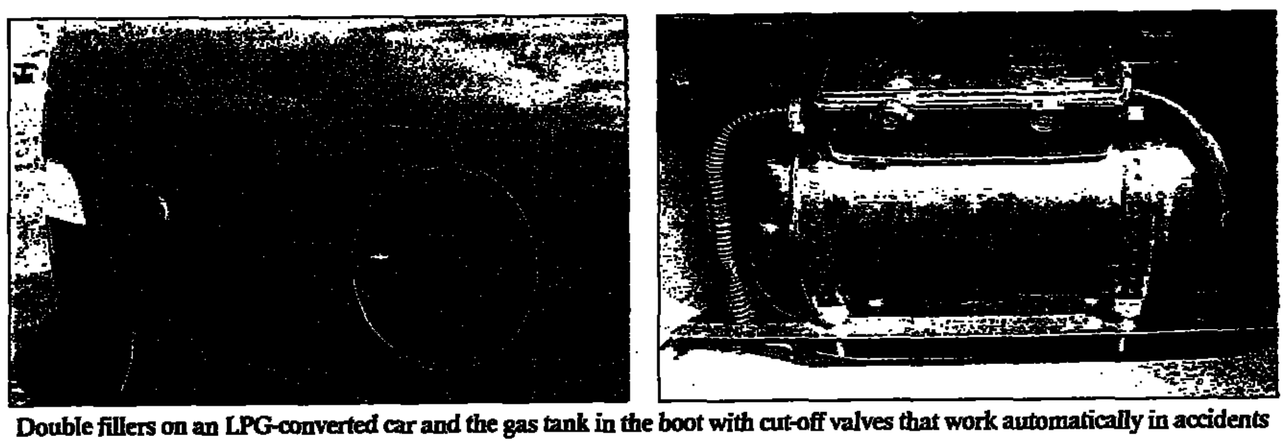
In the search for an alternative to petrol and diesel, LPG must now be in pole position, thanks largely to the boost it got in last year's Budget, when duty was reduced by 25 per cent to 10.78p a litre, while that on petrol and diesel was increased again. But until now that reduction seemed to have achieved little in terms of profile, simply because there has been no network of roadside outlets for the fuel. There are an estimated 1,500 vehicles, mostly commercial, running around Britain on LPG. The figure is growing, but is still pathetically few compared to the million-plus in Italy and the 450,000 in Holland.

As an alternative to petrol and diesel, LPG must be in pole position after the boost it got in last year's Budget, when duty was reduced by 25 per cent

The great advantage of LPG is cleanliness. It eliminates visible smoke and soot and its exhaust emissions are claimed to be 70 per cent lower than either petrol or diesel. Most importantly, it produces no particulates, the harmful sooty specks blamed for the increasing incidence of asthma and other lung diseases that have gone such a long way recently towards destroying any claims for diesel as an environmentally-friendly fuel.

It's not, of course, as clean as electricity, which produces no such emissions. But even the most advanced electric vehicles, on sale in America and undergoing tests in Coventry and elsewhere, suffer from the old problems of short range and heavy and costly batteries.

The idea of a car that runs on gas sounds a bit scary to a lot of people, but LPG has now been around for more than 60 years. Modern pressurised tanks, which have been subject to exhaustive tests, are equipped with cut-off valves that work automatically in the event of accidents.



Double fillers on an LPG-converted car and the gas tank in the boot with cut-off valves that work automatically in accidents

So what is it like to drive a car fuelled by LPG? I borrowed the Accord for a week of commuting between home and office in London and house-viewing in Kent, following routes I have covered in vehicles of almost every description from the desperately decrepit to the enviably extravagant. The answer is that once the car is going there is no difference at all.

The only peculiarity is the starting procedure. There is a switch mounted on the centre console by which the driver can select gas or petrol. But, because the pure gas is initially slow to mix with air, the conversion is set up so that even when the switch is in the gas position, the engine starts on petrol.

Let it run a few seconds, blip the throttle and it switches to gas. If you forget the blip, the gas simply cuts in the first time the engine exceeds 2,000rpm.

There is a third position in which it is possible — if you've run out of petrol, say — to start the car on gas alone, although because of the vagaries of the initial mixture this might provoke a backfire or brief misfire. If you run out of one fuel on the move, the switch to the other is automatic and happens without a hiccup, as I discovered to my relief in the middle of Euston Road.

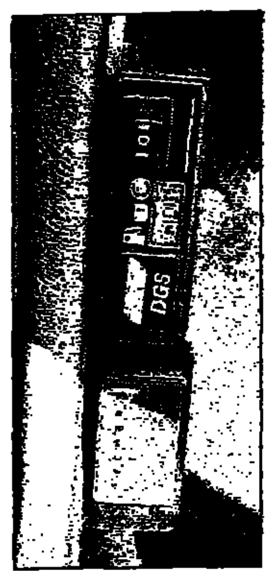
My one criticism of the conversion in the Accord was the gas gauge; a series of lights beneath this switch was impossible to read on the move and still required a great deal of squinting and shading even at a standstill. Then Sisson showed me the much neater conversion on his own Vauxhall Vectra. When the switch was flicked, the standard fuel gauge simply read for gas instead of petrol.

Calor and Jet's long-term aim, of course, is to encourage the introduction of specific LPG engines by major manufacturers. But the dual-fuel conversion has one advantage: the cars have virtually twice the range of a standard model.

LPG

The cost and the benefits

- TO CONVERT a petrol engine to dual-fuel use with LPG costs about £1,100. The conversion utilises existing engine-management electronics and is easily removed when the car is sold on.
- THERE are about 100 LPG filling points in Britain at present. Calor estimates that on a fleet vehicle covering 20,000 miles a year conversion costs can be recouped in four years.
- USING LPG also extends the life of oil, spark plugs and catalytic converters.
- TANKS take up surprisingly little room. They are pressurised and can survive impacts better than petrol or diesel tanks.



Dual-system switch and fuel gauge

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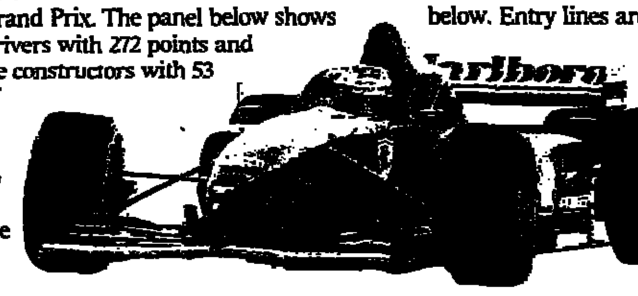
On the eve of tomorrow's race, the Argentine Grand Prix in Buenos Aires, we reprint the Fantasy Formula One scores for each of the selections after the Brazilian Grand Prix. The panel below shows Berger leading the drivers with 272 points and McLaren heading the constructors with 53 points. Full results of tomorrow's race will appear in Sport next Friday. To register to play our £40,000 Fantasy Formula One game, in association with the Marlboro World Championship Team, just choose a team of six racing drivers and six constructors, three from each of the four groups listed in the panel below. Entry lines are open for registration for the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola until noon, Thursday April 24. You can check the position of your team(s) by using our checkline.



- You can also play Fantasy Formula One with *The Sunday Times*

THE PRIZES

JACKPOT: The manager with the best team score on our Fantasy Formula One leaderboard after the final race of the season, the Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril, on October 26, will win £25,000. Prizes of £10,000 and £5,000 will go to two runners-up.

INDIVIDUAL RACE WINNERS: The manager of the team which scores the most points in tomorrow's Argentine GP will win a VIP trip to the British GP. The runner-up will get a Sony PlayStation and Formula One game worth £250.

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You will then be asked to give your Fantasy Formula One team name, your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number. You will receive a 10-digit PIN number as confirmation of your entry.

TRANSFERS If you've already entered a team you can change up to four selections before the San Marino GP by calling 0891 555 994 (++44 990 100 394 ex UK) before noon on Thursday April 24. Your new team must comprise three selections from each of groups A, B, C and D. The first three selections you make will be deemed to be your prediction for the Monaco GP bonus points.

CHECK YOUR SCORE Check the scores and positions of your team(s) by calling 0891 884 648 (0044 990 100 348 ex UK) and tap in your 10-digit PIN number. The line currently carries all positions after the Brazilian GP and will be updated on Wednesday April 16 after the Argentine GP.

MAKE 3 SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THESE FOUR GROUPS

[illegible] A					
01 D Hill	93	90	07 M Hakkinen	125	253
02 M Schumacher	126	261	08 D Coulthard	116	266
03 J Villeneuve	172	192	09 R Barrichello	22	77
04 E Irvine	101	113	10 H-H Frentzen	116	222
05 J Alesi	121	164	11 J Herbert	131	141
06 G Berger	149	272	12 M Salo	119	160
[illegible]					
13 O Panis	140	257	19 G Fishichella	118	135
14 J Verstappen	107	99	20 S Nakano	106	227
15 U Katayama	92	126	21 N Larini	126	247
16 P Diniz	16	130	22 J Trulli	118	232
17 R Rosset	0	0	23 J Magnussen	7	41
18 R Schumacher	59	65	24 V Sospiri	0	0
[illegible] C			CONSTRUCTORS GROUP D		
25 Williams	30	29	31 Arrows	-10	-3
26 Ferrari	22	37	32 Sauber	20	31
27 McLaren	23	53	33 Tyrrell	14	-6
28 Benetton	25	38	34 Minardi	15	23
29 Jordan	9	-11	35 Stewart	-10	-30
30 Prost	24	46	36 Lola	0	0

The first column of figures in light type after the names show the Fantasy Formula One Brazilian GP race scores, the second column the total competition points so far

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0891 calls cost 50p per minute (standard tariffs apply to +44 990 calls).

CHANGING TIMES

Rover's centre of tomorrow

Ian Morton visits the plant that will design the millennium Mini

The Mini for the millennium — the car that will take the legend of the the Sixties into another century — will be born in Rover's new design and engineering centre in Warwickshire.

The £30 million centre has already produced the "Spiritual" Mini concept cars that captured the limelight at the Geneva motor show. Its creation, which has entirely taken place since BMW acquired Rover, appears to offer further confirmation that Munich intends Rover to remain a separate and largely self-propelled partner within BMW.

Sited on Rover's existing 900-acre text complex and proving ground at Gaydon, the centre was mooted in 1992 when it was decided to centralise the company's historically dispersed design, engineering and development studios. When BMW took over Rover in 1994, detailed planning had only just begun.

"As a strongly engineering-led company, BMW fully supported Rover's ambitions to create a world-class product design and development centre in Britain," says Nick Stephenson, Rover Group design and engineering director. "Rover's new facility plan fitted well with BMW's existing R&D resources."

Work started in March 1995, 14 months after BMW's takeover. Now more than 1,000 staff are designing Rovers for the millennium. A number are from BMW, but for that matter several Rover personnel are now based in Munich.

"There is duplication," admits Geoff Upex, design and concept director. "We have here much of the same equipment that BMW has — strategically it would be silly for us to have different kit to BMW. We use the same automatic motorised measuring systems and are building our clay models to 40 per cent full size in line with BMW practice because that scale fits BMW's wind tunnel."

Sound barrier: a Range Rover is noise-tested in the semi-anechoic chamber at Gaydon

Projects begun and developed at Gaydon will need Munich approval, says Upex, but on the same basis that Rover's previous owner, British Aerospace, was expected to "take an intense interest at critical stages".

No working balance has been established and there is no assumed formula for this, Upex adds. Some early work is being shared by Gaydon, Munich, independent design houses and BMW's technical centre in the US.

"We have a relationship where on some projects we may co-operate, and on others we may compete. It's about best use of a total resource."

Vastly airy, with daylight flooding in through huge windows, the centre includes a large showroom where top-level discussions take place around the concept models on which decisions must be taken, a process modelled on BMW practice.

Outside is a "viewing garden" where Rovers and rival products can be looked at in daylight from up to 100 yards, so that executives never lose contact with how the public sees vehicles.

The main building groups around a central thoroughfare — known as The Street — a number of specialist areas such as clay model-making, woodmill, trim development, fibreglass styling and a workshop where competitors' cars are stripped to reveal their secrets.

Among the specialist research areas on the site established in the quest for more reliable and refined Rovers are two which have innovative facilities unmatched in the automotive industry.

To tackle increasingly tough regulations to control the noise emitted by passing vehicles — and to overcome the exigences of British weather — Rover has brought the test indoors into a large semi-anechoic chamber (sound is absorbed by the walls to reduce echoes virtually to nil) in which a stationary vehicle is revved on rollers and a computer runs the sound through a fixed avenue of microphones to reproduce exactly the effect of a moving vehicle passing a single microphone.

And in the Crest facility (combined road and environment simulation test), a vehicle on a suspension-pummelling test rig may at the same time be subjected to the equivalent of intense sunlight from 27 high-frequency lamps each delivering 4 kilowatts — "the same as standing unprotected in the middle of the Sahara at midday", according to the technician in charge — while the temperature may be varied between -40C and +80C and the humidity can be adjusted from 5 to 95 per cent.

"Where can I sell something fast?"
See p. 8

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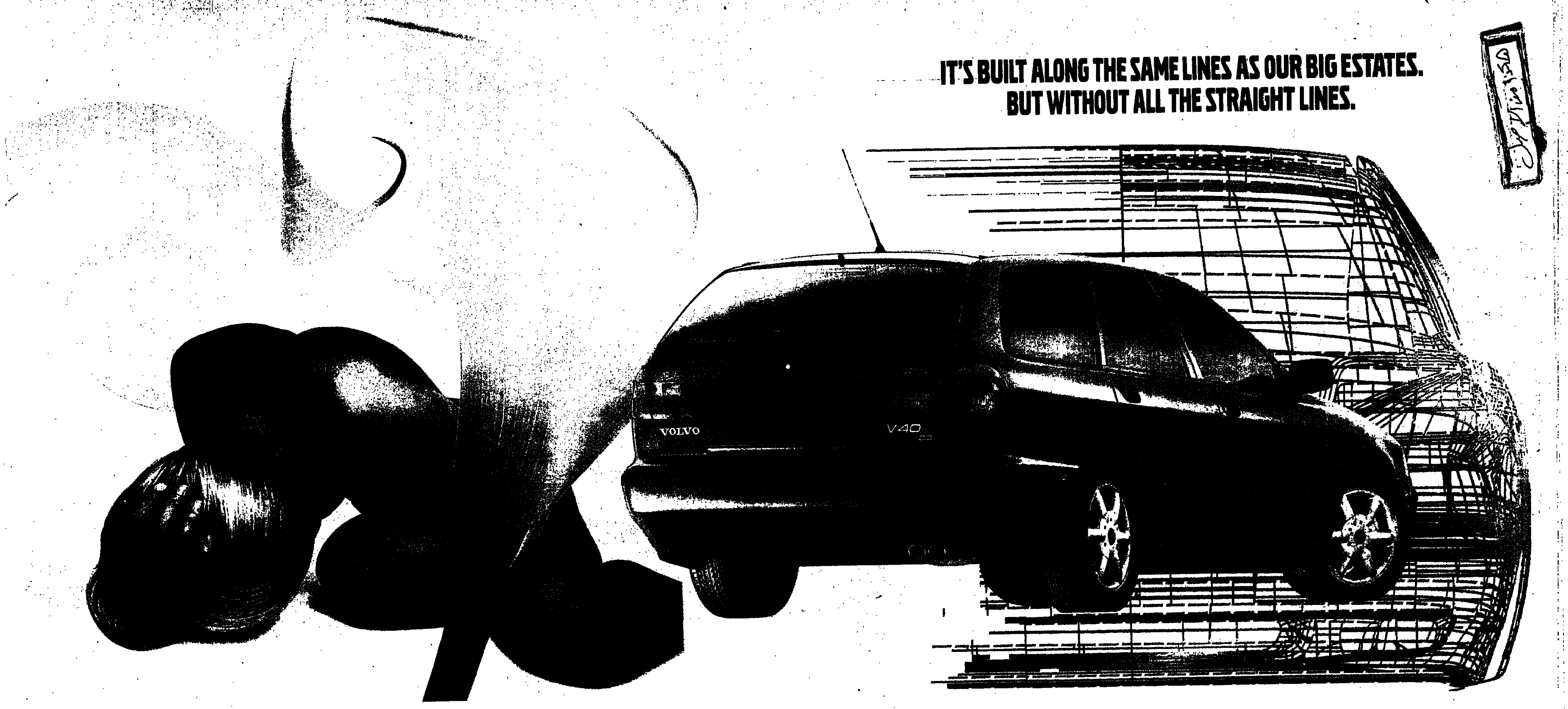

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